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HEAVY METAL™

LES HUMANOIDES ASSOCIES

THEY WERE MADE OF **METAL** AND **HATE**. ON THE GIGANTIC PLANET **GAIL** THEY RAISED THEIR ARROGANT ARCHITECTURE TOWARD **HEAVEN** AND THEIR EYES, AS **BRILLIANT** AS THOSE OF **WILD BEASTS**, TOWARD THE **NIGHT**. THEIR ENORMOUS HANDS SEEMED TO BE MADE OF THE SAME METAL AS THEIR **ARMOR**, AND THE TERRIBLE **BOOMING** OF THEIR **VOICES** COULD BE HEARD IN THE **NIGHT**...

THEY WERE ALL **MERCENARIES, RENEGADES, CRIMINALS** FROM THE ENTIRE **GALAXY**. THEIR ONLY **PLEASURE** WAS TO **KILL** AND TO **KILL AGAIN**... THEY MADE AN INFERNO OF **WAR** FROM THE **PARADISE** OF FLOWERS AND BIRDS -- THAT WAS THE GIGANTIC PLANET **GAIL**.

AND OVER ALL OF IT REIGNED **IRIAM MERENNEN**, ABSOLUTE **MASTER** OF HIS **EMPIRE**, A **MANIAC**, AN UNKNOWN BEING WHO HAD APPEARED FROM **NOWHERE**. WITH THESE MYSTERIOUS **FORTIFICATIONS** HE BUILT THIS **EMPIRE** OF **DEATH**, SO THAT HE WAS A **MENACE** EVEN TO THE **EMPEROR SHAAN** HIMSELF.

IN THESE TIMES OF **CHAOS**, THE GALACTIC CONFEDERATIONS TORE EACH OTHER TO **PIECES**, AND SCHEMING POLITICIANS AND GREEDY MERCHANTS LIVED ON A RUINED POPULACE.

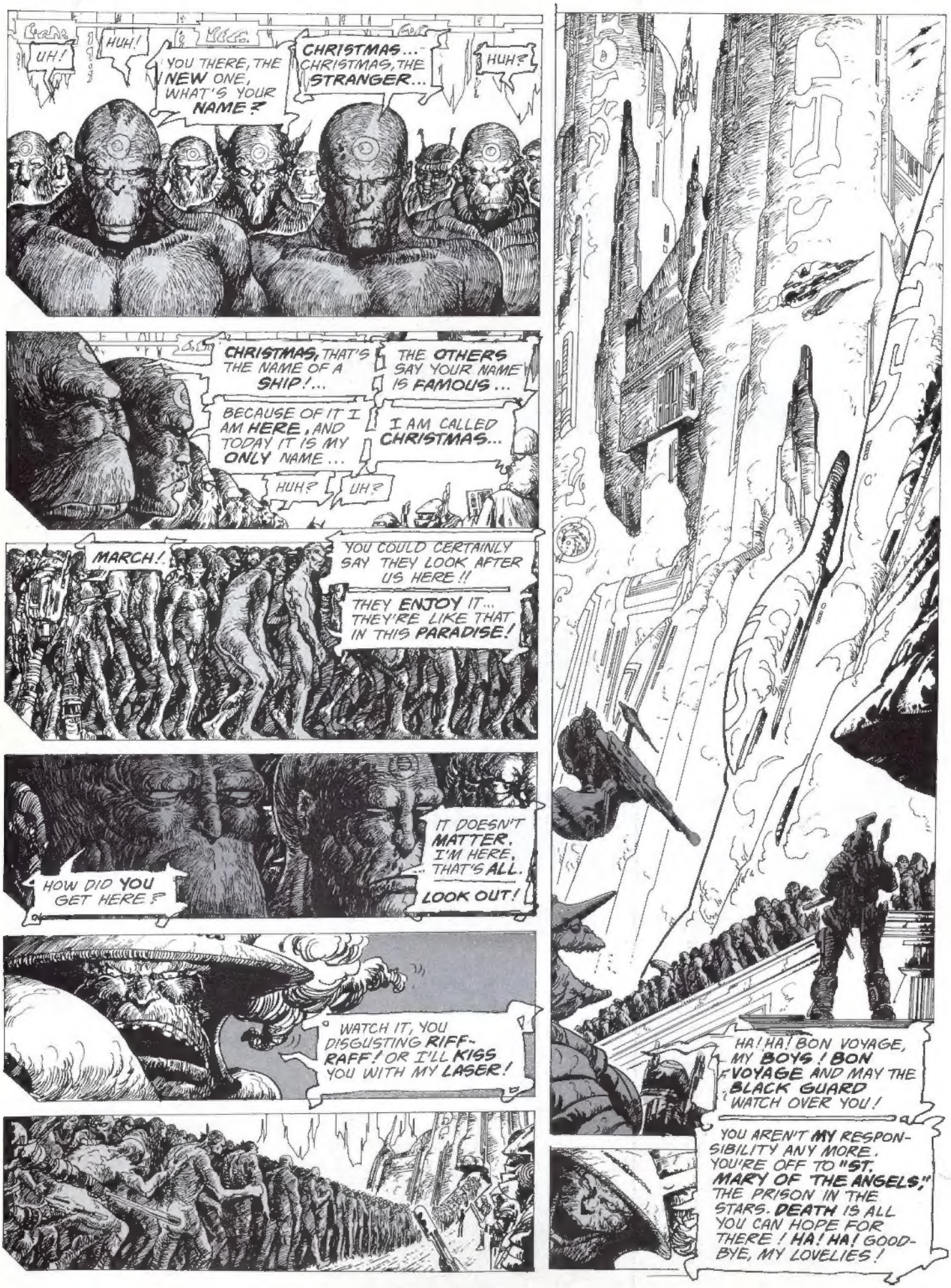
BUT A BITTER RESENTMENT WAS GROWING AMONG THESE PEOPLE - IT WAS AN ERA FOR A ZEALOT TO REVEAL HIMSELF. WITH THE HELP OF HIS **SPIES**, "THE EYES OF THE NIGHT," AND THE MADMEN FROM OTHER OTHER REGIONS, **IRIAM MERENNEN** WAS DREAMING OF **CONQUEST**.

THE UNCERTAIN THRONE OF THE **EMPEROR** AND SUCCESSFUL **REBELLIONS** ON THE PLANETS OF THE CENTRAL REGIONS RENDERED HIS HOPES PROPITIOUS. TO REALIZE THESE HOPES, **IRIAM**, LIKE SO MANY OTHERS, RECRUITED THE NUCLEUS OF HIS **TROOPS** FROM THE MOST FORMIDABLE PRISON IN THE WHOLE UNIVERSE, **"ST. MARY OF THE ANGELS."**

FROM THERE, THE EMPEROR SHAAN HIMSELF DREW HIS **BLACK LEGIONNAIRES** - FROM THERE, THE RICH MERCHANTS BOUGHT THEIR **BODYGUARDS** - AND FROM THERE, OTHERS SNATCHED THE OBJECTS OF THEIR **DESIRES**, BECAUSE, IN TRUTH, **"ST. MARY OF THE ANGELS"** WAS, UNDER THE LAW'S WINKING EYE, AN ACTUAL **SLAVE MARKET**, A PLACE OF **TERROR**, A STAIN DARKER THAN EVEN THE VOID OF THE **KNOWN WORLD**...

EVERY DAY, SHIPS LEFT GAIL FOR "ST. MARY OF THE ANGELS." ONE AND ALL WERE THROWN PELL-MELL INTO THIS PRISON WITHOUT TRIAL -- THIEVES, CRIMINALS, POLITICIANS, MURDERERS, THOSE WHO HAD ONLY COMMITTED THE CRIME OF RAISING THEIR VOICES AGAINST OPPRESSION.
ALL ENDURED THIS APPALLING INCARCERATION. SUICIDE WAS IMPOSSIBLE THERE, BUT..

THOSE WHO REFUSED TO SERVE IN THE ARMY WERE LOBOTOMIZED, TURNED INTO VERITABLE ZOMBIES, AND WITH THEIR SOULS DESTROYED, THEY BECAME IN THEIR TURN MACHINES OF DEATH ...
ONE DAY, ON A FAR-OFF PLANET, A CONVOY OF CONVICTS LEFT IN ITS TURN...
ON YOUR FEET FOR THE ROLL CALL, YOU RABBLE!
CONVICTS, FROM THIS TIME FORTH, YOUR NAMES ARE NULL AND VOID. YOU WILL BE KNOWN BY YOUR NUMBERS. THE BRAND ON YOUR FACE WILL BE YOUR MARK OF STATUS.
PREPARE TO EMBARK!


UH!
HUH!
YOU THERE, THE NEW ONE, WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
CHRISTMAS... CHRISTMAS, THE STRANGER...
HUH?
CHRISTMAS, THAT'S THE NAME OF A SHIP!...
THE OTHERS SAY YOUR NAME IS FAMOUS...
BECAUSE OF IT I AM HERE, AND TODAY IT IS MY ONLY NAME...
I AM CALLED CHRISTMAS...
HUH?
UH?
MARCH!
YOU COULD CERTAINLY SAY THEY LOOK AFTER US HERE!!
THEY ENJOY IT... THEY'RE LIKE THAT IN THIS PARADISE!
HOW DID YOU GET HERE?
IT DOESN'T MATTER. I'M HERE, THAT'S ALL.
LOOK OUT!
WATCH IT, YOU DISGUSTING RIFF-RAFF! OR I'LL KISS YOU WITH MY LASER!
HA! HA! BON VOYAGE, MY BOYS! BON VOYAGE AND MAY THE BLACK GUARD WATCH OVER YOU!
YOU AREN'T MY RESPONSIBILITY ANY MORE. YOU'RE OFF TO "ST. MARY OF THE ANGELS," THE PRISON IN THE STARS. DEATH IS ALL YOU CAN HOPE FOR THERE! HA! HA! GOOD-BYE, MY LOVELIES!

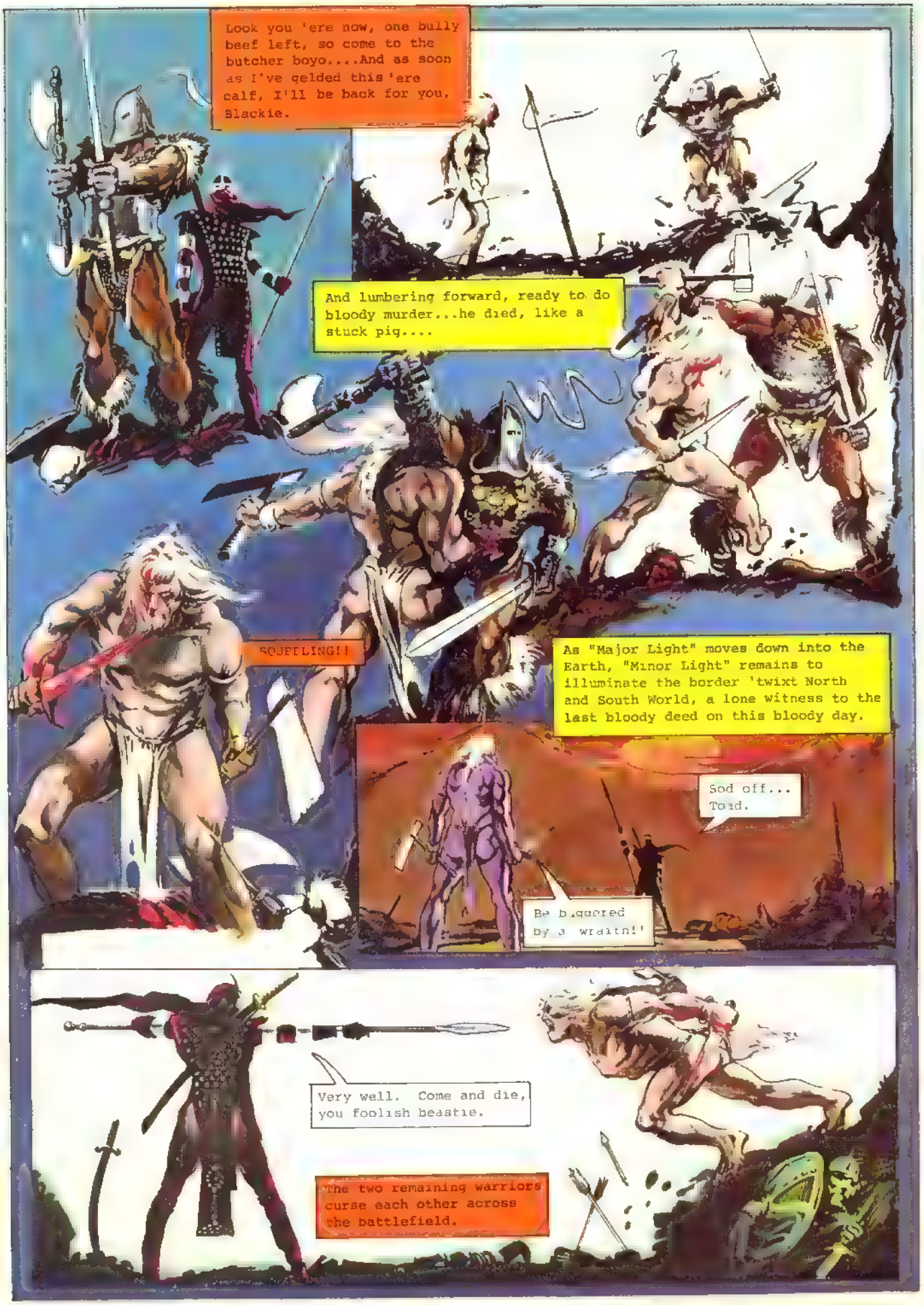
To Be Continued...

WORLD APART

THE GOLDEN CITY BY E.E. DAVIS

OUR WORLD. IT IS A SAVAGE PLACE. FULL TO OVERFLOWING WITH MISTY THINGS. MANKIND'S LOT IT IS TO PERISH. AND, IN TIME, TO ROT AND FEED THE EARTH, WHETHER DEATH COMES ON THE BATTLEFIELD OR BY THE HEARTH. MAN FOREVER DAMNED. THE FINGERS OF HELL SNATCHING OUR VERY SOULS, BURYING THEIR DEEP IN A SLIMY HOLE...BYGARD CHRONICLES: 4803.

They're all bloody, you see, wars. The armies of Periyon in Pigon have met the opposing armies of Jagg-arr upon the Bam-ier Plains and have proven themselves to be no exception....After ten hours of brutality, the plains are strewn with the dead and dying...all save three, that is. One big and brawny beggar. A tall and slender stud in black, and a pink-skinned, white-headed heathen... now making ready to finish off a good day's war.


Look you 'ere now, one bully beef left, so come to the butcher boyo....And as soon as I've gelded this 'ere calf, I'll be back for you, Blackie.
And lumbering forward, ready to do bloody murder...he died, like a stuck pig....
SQUELLING!!
As "Major Light" moves down into the Earth, "Minor Light" remains to illuminate the border 'twixt North and South World, a lone witness to the last bloody deed on this bloody day.
Sod off... Toad.
Be bigger by a wraith!'
Very well. Come and die, you foolish beastie.
The two remaining warriors curse each other across the battlefield.

Wakie, wakie. My abrasive, foolish beastie!!
Buried in a deep black hole, no earth upon which to stand, no sounds to hear. No light? Sky? Sun? So bright...a face, a wench...
"Wench..."
Wench? Call my master? Ha!!! You are in the tent of Asla Shay Amonn, Master, Ruler, and Spiritual Guide of the Nine Tribes of the Shadee. It was the greatness of Shay Amonn that spared your miserable life, worm. Perhaps Shay Amonn is curious to see the white animal fed as live bait to the desert dogs and their gods. Perhaps Shay Amonn will give you as a training tool to the child warriors of the Shadee. Perhaps Shay Amonn will preserve your hide for, shall we say... sensual indulgence? Maybe, after all, you will die; maybe not.
It is said that your kind stay apart on your Isle of Ruid, where you ape about with your arses to the seven winds, and that you eat your brothers and anyone else foolish enough to venture onto your foul isle.
You consider yourself a solider--a soldier, you surmise! Even this "wench" has seen men at arms, soldiers. You are a comedy, one who bellows without regard for thought.

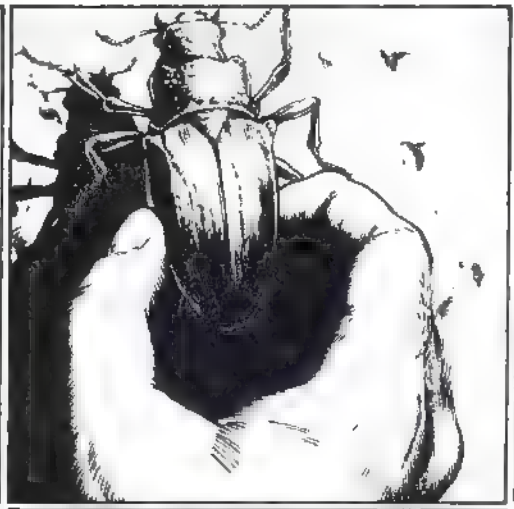
Ah! Foolish one, you still do not see.
The wielder of Shay Amonn's sword, the Holy One, stands before you now!!
I tell you children, it is written that the pink-skinned one did screw up his eyes, and his breathing became so shallow as to escape notice. Done aye, done by a woman. By the God Dog.
Marda here, who is one of my favorites, will minister to your every need. Indeed, it was Marda who pointed out to me your, ah... obvious attributes.
However, I will meditate on this and then we will decide your fate. Until then, White One, you have the countenance of Asla Shay Amonn.

Healing of the body is slow.
But the day of health soon comes ..
And with it, rights of inactivity, a prisoner in your enemy's camp.
There are other uses to which you can be put, on some lonely night. Why, we can pass you around....
Hey Half man! I understand that our mistress cut more things than your face! But don't worry..
Has my foolish beastie come to cry upon my shoulder?
Do you wish me to order my soldiers to leave you alone.. ? Or have you come, perhaps to show me the power of your alien race?

THE SHADEE, NOMADIC BY TRADITIONS, WARRIORS BY NEED AND INSTINCT. THEY ARE RELIGIOUS ASSASSINS. KILL NOW WITH THEIR LONG BLADED KORAS SWORDS.
EXPERT HORSEMEN IN BATTLE, NONE ARE THEIR EQUAL. THEY ALSO MAINTAIN THE AUTOMATIC WEAPONS OF THE DISTANT PAST.
Stupid slug!
ON THE SIXTH MONTH OF HIS ARRIVAL, OUR WHITE-HEADED BRUTE COMES UPON A TENT AT THE FAR PERIMETER OF THE MAIN ENCAMPMENT....

TO BE CONTINUED!

CONQUERING ARMIES



I WAS A SENTRY ..

IN THE FOURTH ARMY.

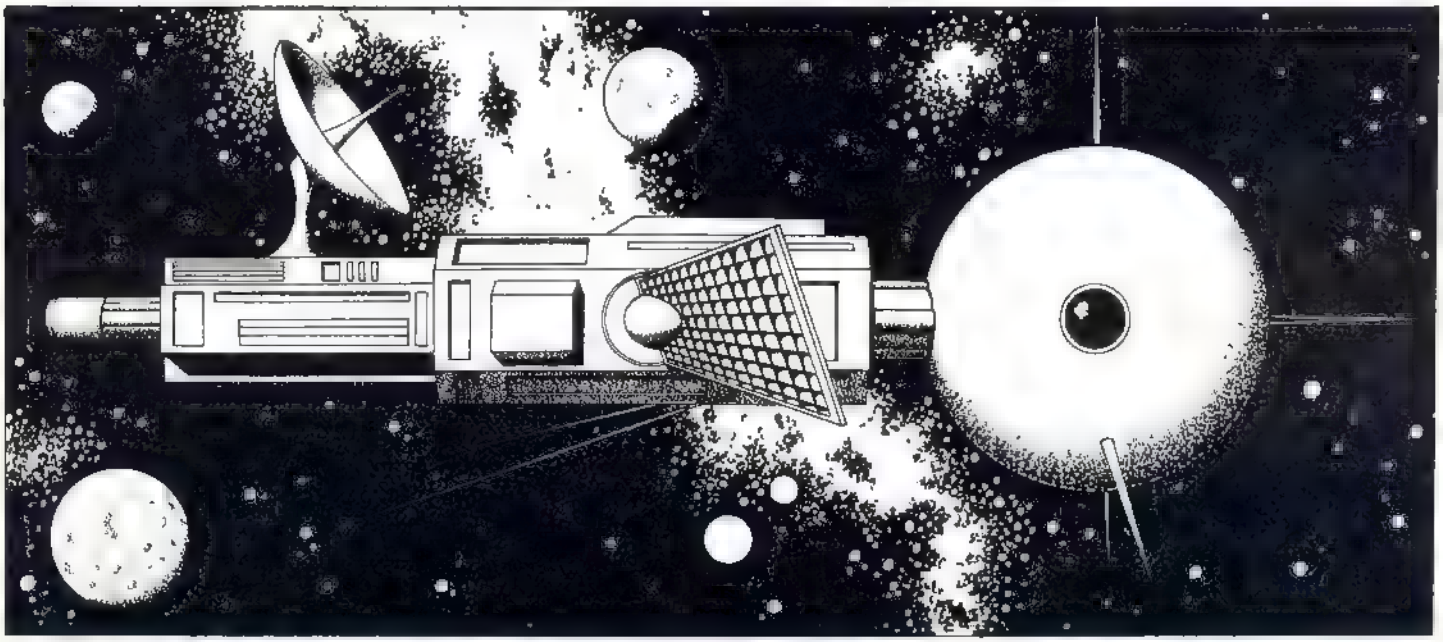
WE HAD COME A LONG WAY...

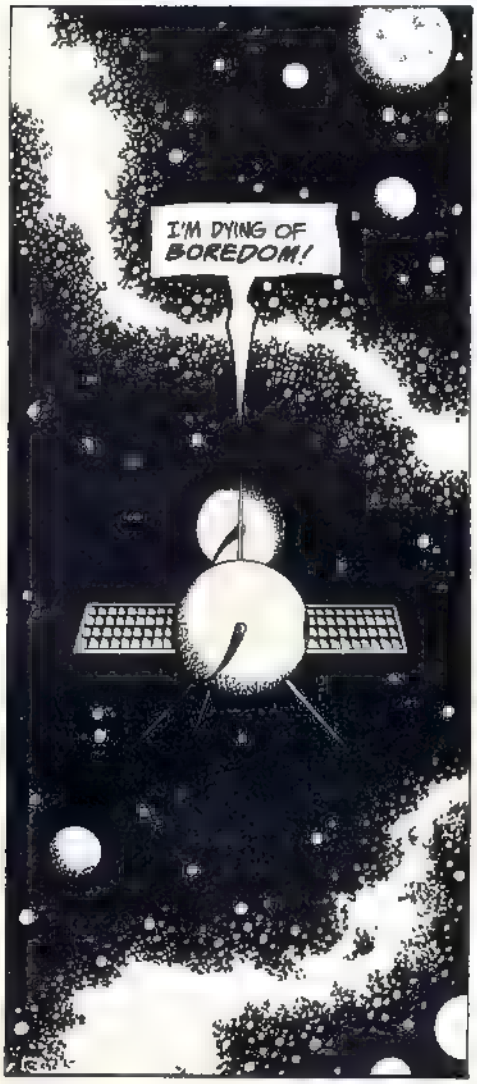
AND WE HAD NOTHING LEFT TO EAT.
IT WAS THEN THAT THE COMMANDER DECIDED TO LEAVE SENTRIES BEHIND TO WATCH THE ROAD...
THE ROAD! WHAT ROAD?
IN TRUTH, WE WERE SO MANY LESS MOUTHS TO FEED.
SOME DESPERATE FELLOWS SURVIVED FOR A WHILE BY THEIR WITS..
BEFORE DYING OF HUNGER.

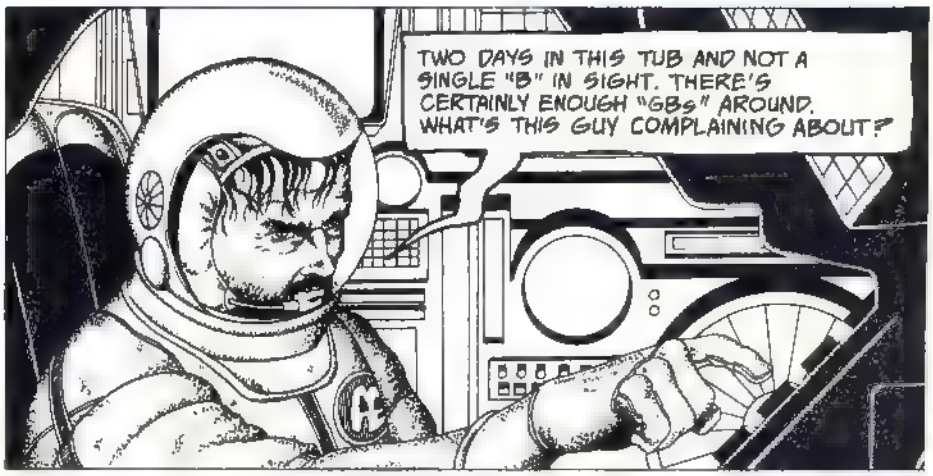
AND ONE DAY...
IT WAS MY TURN ON DUTY.
THAT WAS WHEN I SAW THE ONES WHO WERE FOLLOWING US.
THEY ATTACKED IN THE NIGHT, AND I COULD HEAR THE NOISE OF BATTLE
CERTAINLY, I COULD HAVE PREVENTED IT

BUT HE NEEDN'T HAVE CHOSEN ME...
THE BASTARD.
GAL

The Vessel

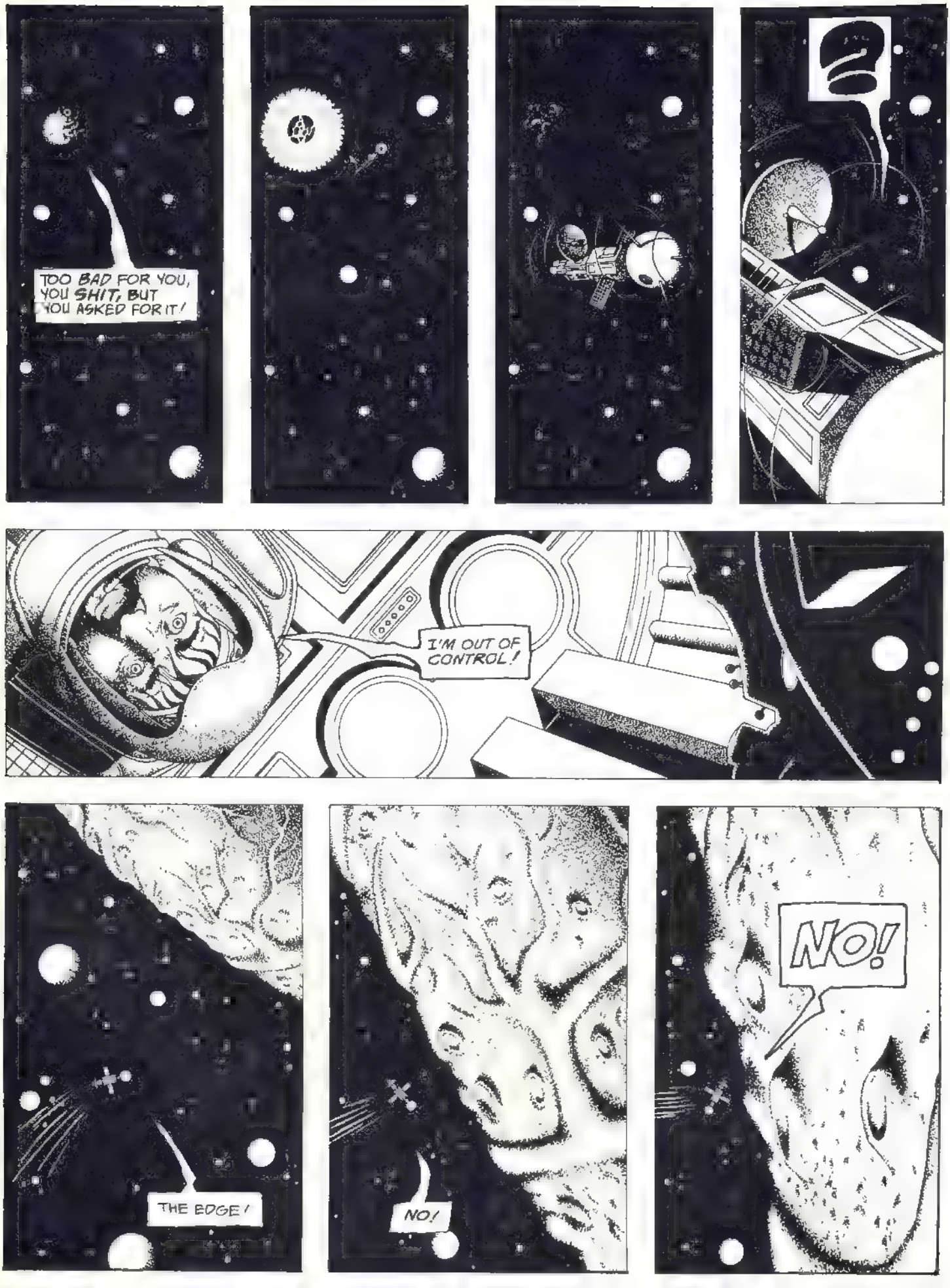



I'M DYING OF BOREDOM!


TWO DAYS IN THIS TUB AND NOT A SINGLE "B" IN SIGHT. THERE'S CERTAINLY ENOUGH "GBs" AROUND. WHAT'S THIS GUY COMPLAINING ABOUT?

JUST ANOTHER ONE TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE "AMA" TO GORGE HIMSELF ON US. BY EVERYTHING THAT'S "ANTI-B" I SAY, "SCREW THIS DUDE!"

2
TCHAC
SHIT!
OH, MY GOD! THIS FOOL OF A "GB" HAS TAKEN ME FOR A "B." THIS GUY IS COMPLETELY INSANE!
BUT THIS IMBECILE IS GOING TO SCARF ME UP

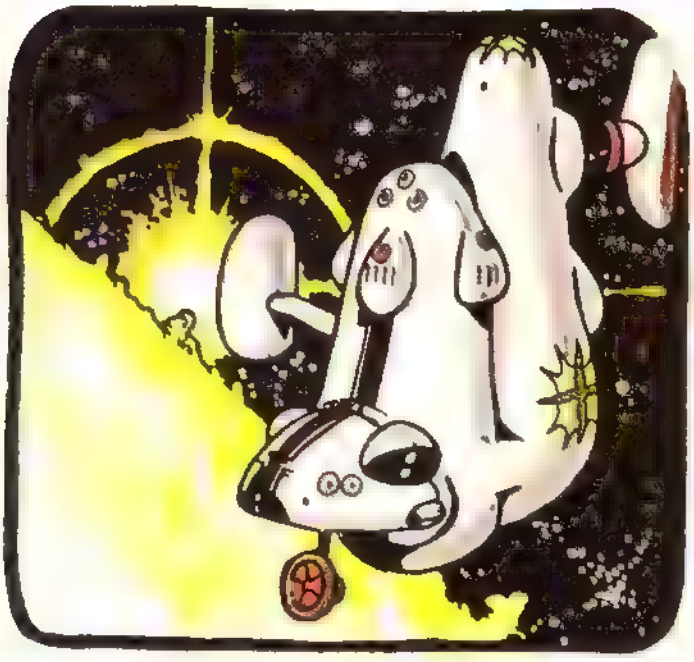

TOO BAD FOR YOU, YOU SHIT, BUT YOU ASKED FOR IT!
I'M OUT OF CONTROL!
THE EDGE!
NO!
NO!

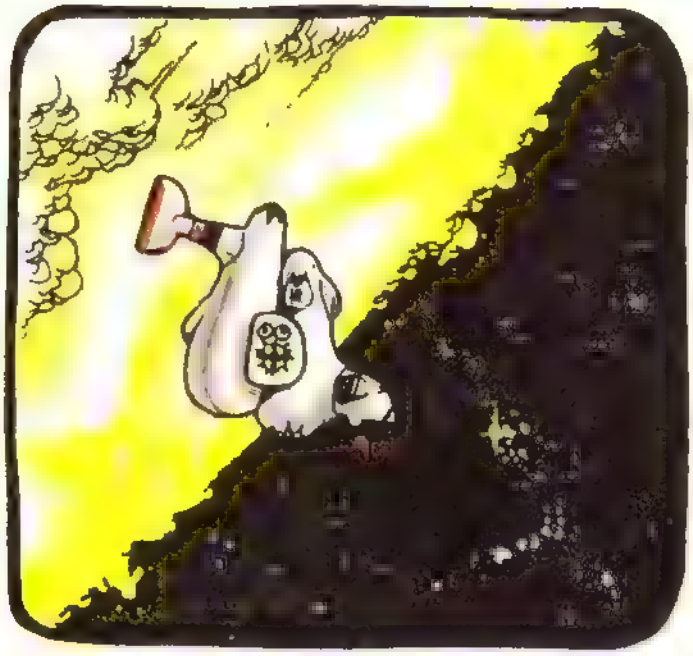
SPLACC
AAAAAAA
EDWARD!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT AT ALL. A BLOOD VESSEL SUDDENLY BURST. THAT'S WHAT KILLED HIM.
SOB, SOB.
I ALWAYS SAID HE TOOK FAR TOO MANY ANTIBIOTICS!
THE END
DOMINIQUE HE 1976

SUNPOT

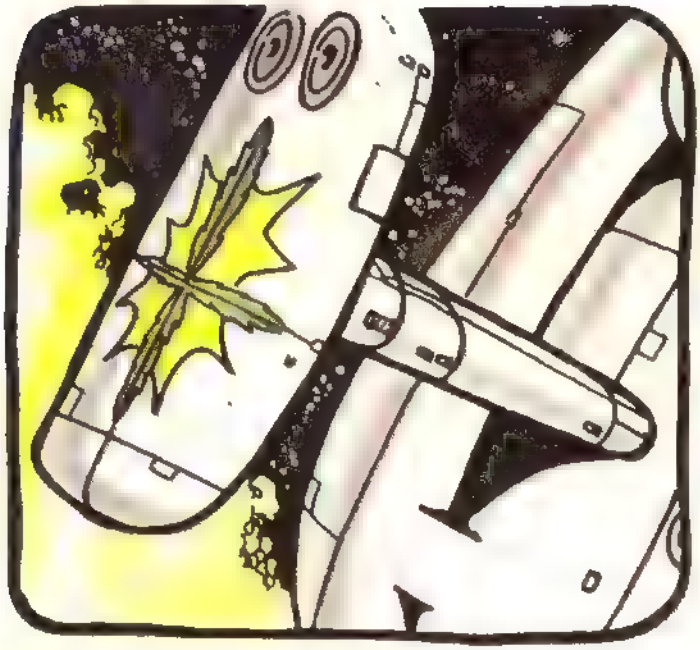
CHAPTER 4

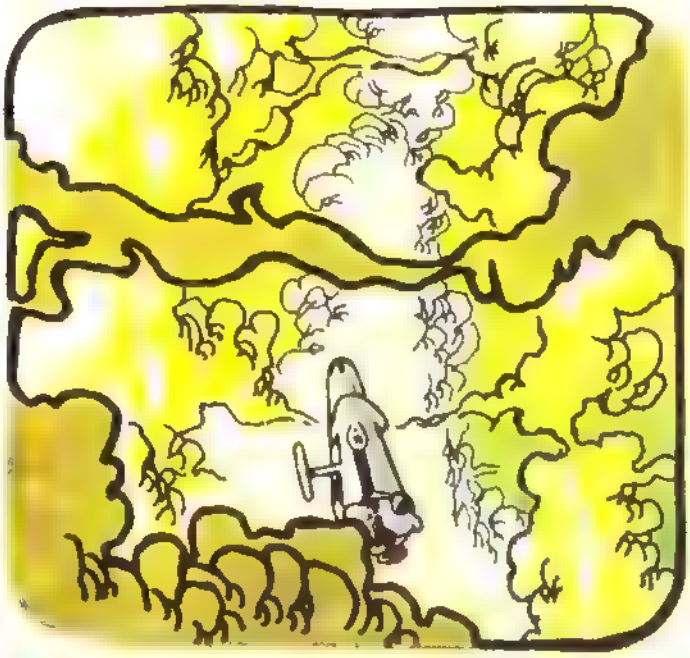
THE FAT SUNPOT HANGS LIKE A SILENT TONSIL ABOVE BEAUTIFUL PLANET VENUS.. BUT THE PLACID, NEVER-NEVERNESS OF SPACE IS AN ILLUSION. THE SUNPOT IS IN A NEW ORBIT WITH A PERIHELION OF 100 FEET!"





THE WHOLE SHIP IS POWERLESS SINCE THE REVOLUTION IN THE POWER FACTORY AT 2 O'CLOCK. A BAND OF VICIOUS WORKERS, LED BY A FANATICAL GYRO ENGINEER, HAD SEALED OFF THE MDA GYRO-BLOCKAND SET UP A COLLISION ORBIT WITH VENUS!





SUNPOT PLANET DIPS INTO THE VAST CANYONS OF CLOUDS AND SUBMERGES THROUGH LAYER AFTER LAYER LIKE A SILENT, GLIDING GHOST SHIP ON ITS WAY TO THE MYSTERIOUS SEA BOTTOM...

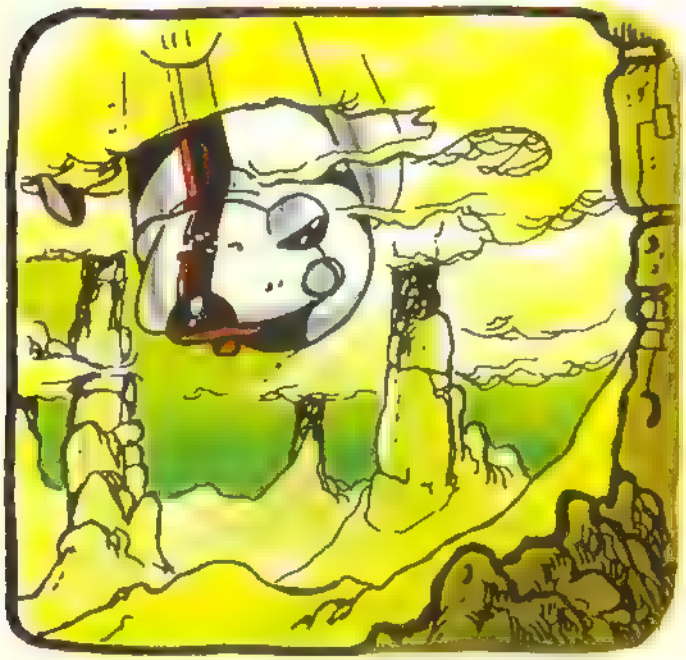
Dr. ELECTRIC PALAVERS WITH THE EVIL REBELS

BELLWDA BUMP, GIVE ME THAT GOD-DAMN PHONE.. DIS PRANK HAS GONE FAR ENOUGH!
DIS IS DR. ELECTRIC SPEAKING, YOU MAGGOT-INFESTED WORMS, YOU SOWS' ASSES, YOU MISERABLE ABORTIONS!
HEY, DOC, TAKE IT EASY ON THEM OR THEY'LL NEVER GIVE UP THE GYRO BLOCK!
THE SUNPOT PLANET IS GLIDING IN AT 20-KNOTS, NOW, LESS THAN A MILE ABOVE VENUS... THE WHEEL HOUSE DRIVERS TRY VALIANTLY TO AVOID THE CRUMBLING SAND STONE MOUNTAIN PEAKS... BUT NOT ALWAYS...
WELL, BIG SHOT, YOU SPENT TEN MINUTES SCREAMING LIKE A MAD MAN AT THEM... DID IT DO ANY GOOD?..
ERR... I.. AHH.. I HAD DA WRONG NUMBER.. DAT WAS HYDROPONICS..
VAUGHN BODE

BOBO THE VICIOUS REBEL CHIEF

BOBO, IT'S STUPID DR ELECTRIC ON DA HORN SCREAMIN' AN RANTING FOR US TO SURRENDER...

AHH. YEAH, OKAY.. TELL HIM ER, TELL HIM WE GONNA GIVE UP IF HE PROMISE NOT TO KILL US...



SUNPOT IS AT ITS LOWEST POINT IN ORBIT.. IF THE DRIVERS CAN JUST STEER CLEAR OF THE ROCKS AND DUNES THEY WILL START BACK UP AWAY FROM THE SURFACE [THEIR ONE CHANCE TO RECTIFY THEIR ERRATIC ORBIT]...

UNFORTUNATELY, AND AS FATE AND ME WOULD HAVE IT, A GIANT DUNE LOOMS OUT BEFORE THEM!

YARGH A GIANT LOOMING DUNE!!

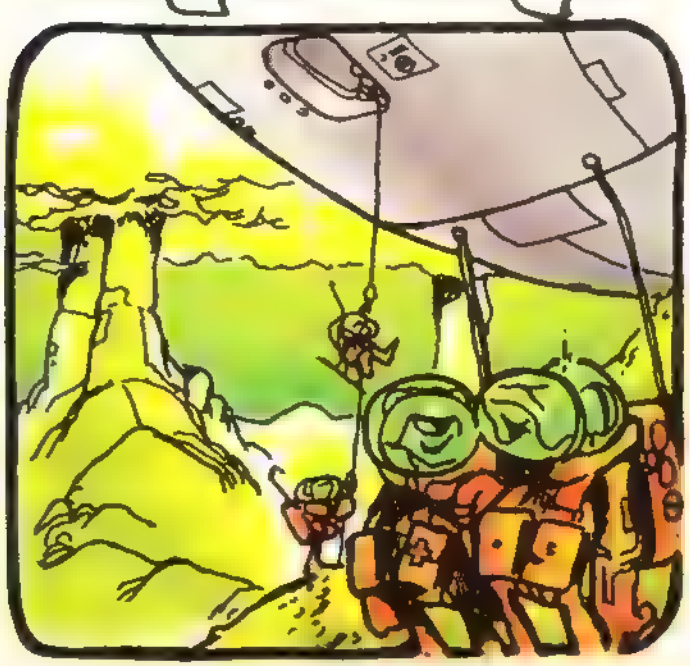
THE SUNPOT PLANET CRUNCHES AND SMUNCHES ALONG THE SLOPING, LOOMING DUNE AND COMES TO A CREAKING, GRAVELLY HALT... SUNPOT HAS RUN AGROUND ON VIRGIN VENUS...

BOBO, OR ELECTRIC SAY NEVER MIND GIVING UP. HE ADVISE US TO MAKE A RUN FOR IT ON THE SURFACE..

ESH, ME AN MY LOUSY, SUCKY IDEAS! ALL I WANTED WAS BETTER CHOW AN MORE TIME OFF... SNIFF

WOO, IT'S HOT AS A NYMPHO'S TIT OUT HERE!.. WHERE WE GONNA' GO, BOBO?..

AW... I DON'T KNOW... OVER DAT WAY I GUESS.. JUS' DON'T BOTHER ME... [BOY, WHAT A PICKLE.]..



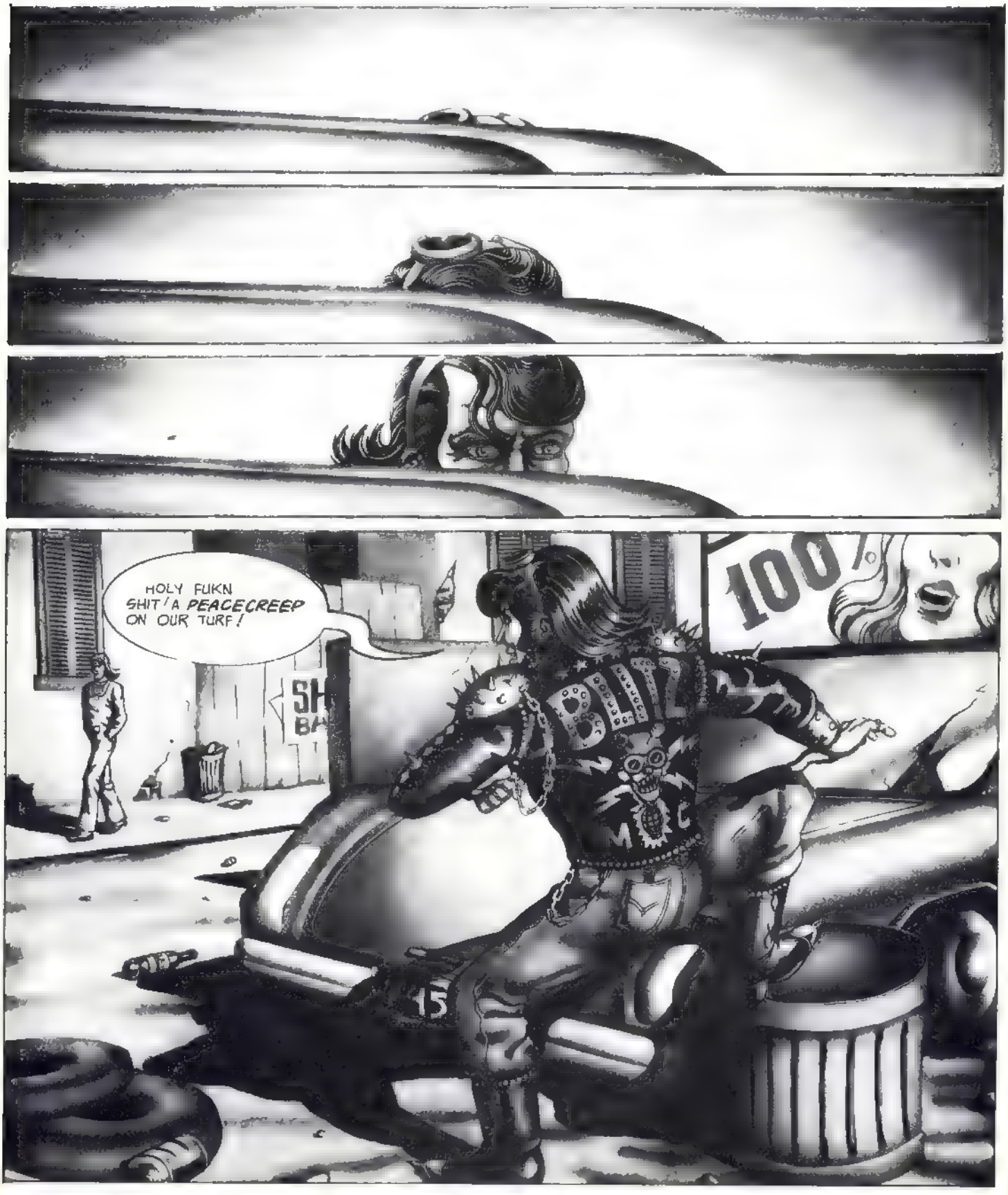
I'LL BET SOME SORT OF VENUSIAN LIFE FORM WILL COME AN SAVE US, OR WE'LL FIND A LOST UTOPIAN CIVILIZATION..

WHAT YOU MEAN IS WE'LL BE DEAD OF HEAT PROSTRATION, DEHYDRATION AND ASPHYXIATION IN 5 HOURS

TO BE CONCLUDED NEXT ISSUE

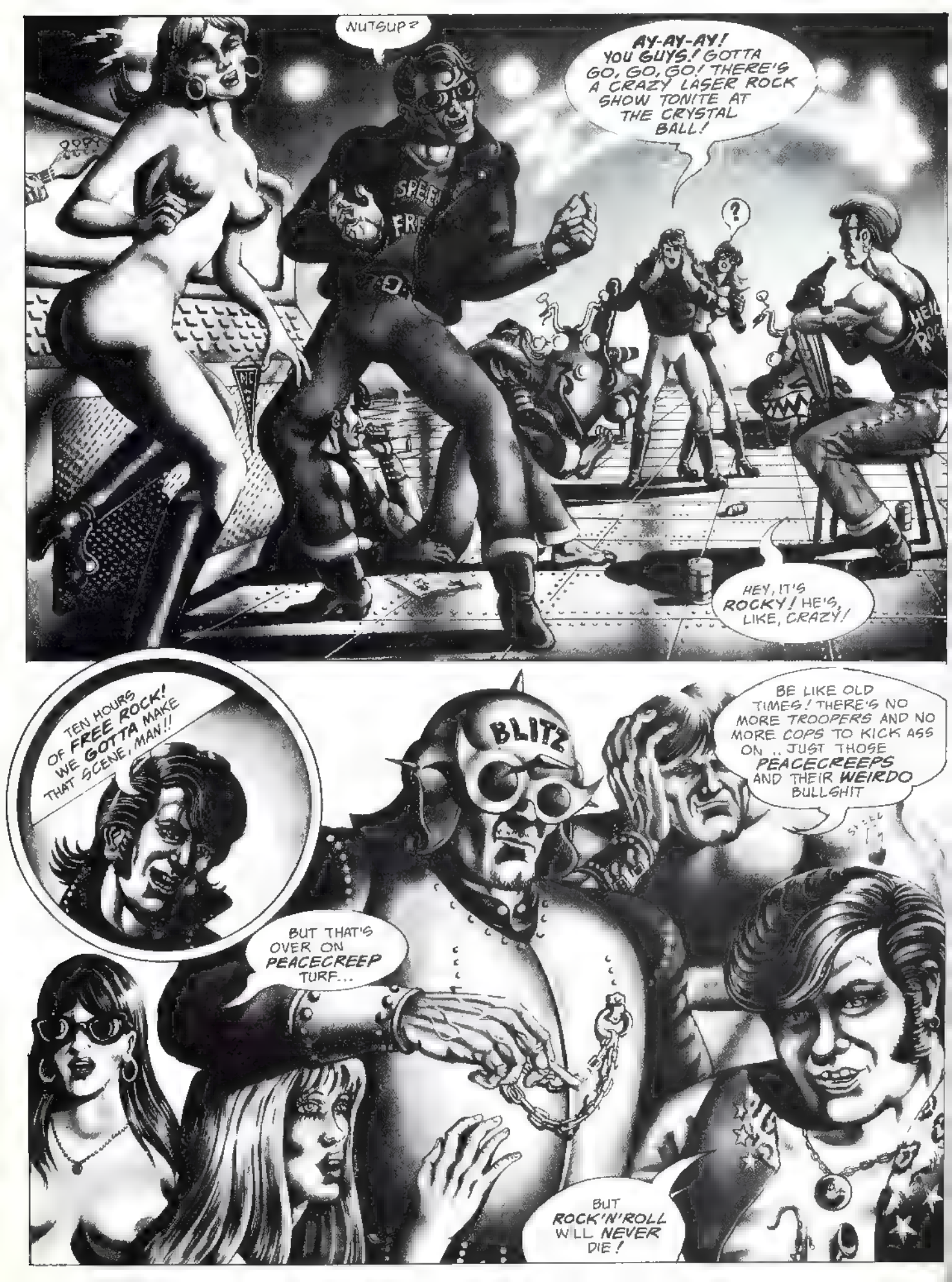
ROCKBLITZ

SERGIO MACEDO '76



THAT CAT GOT NO FUKN RIGHTS HERE! I'LL RIP HIS FUKN GUTS OUT!
YA-AHH!
CRAC!
FZZZT
..WHAZ
WHAT THE FUK? MY HEAD! KRISE, I'M FLIPPIN'!

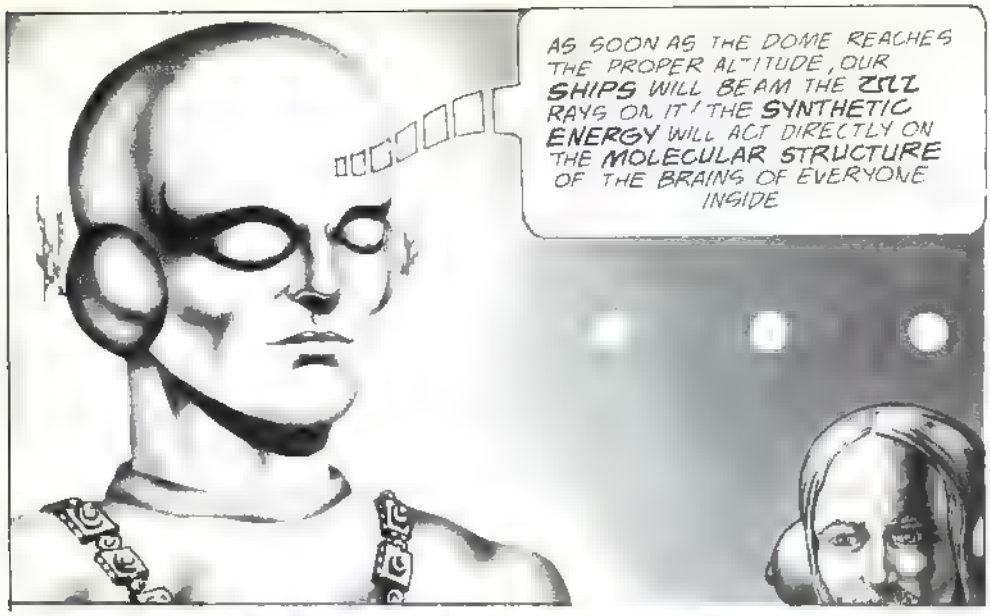
ROCK
HI, THERE, ROCKY BABY! OH, WOW, YOU LOOK REALLY WRECKED, BIG DADDY. C'MERE AND I'LL GIVE YOU A NICE LUBE JOB...
REBEL WITHOUT A CAUSE
GOLDEN ASS
NO TIME, CHICK! SUIT UP, PRONTO. WE'RE GONNA SEE THE GANG! C'MON, MOVE IT!
HEY, YOU LOOK REALLY WEIRD! WHAT'S THE SCORE?
BLITZ

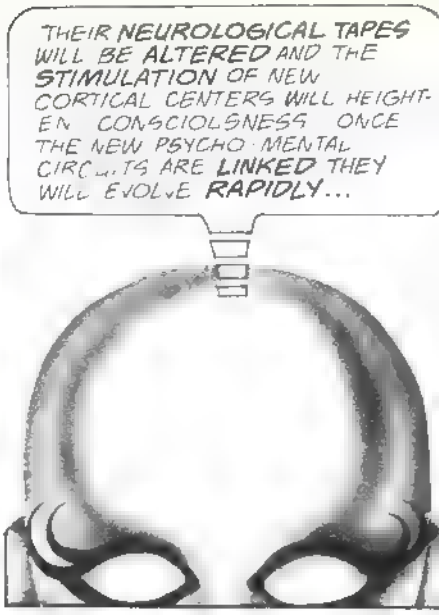

NUTSUP?
AY-AY-AY! YOU GUYS! GOTTA GO, GO, GO! THERE'S A CRAZY LASER ROCK SHOW TONITE AT THE CRYSTAL BALL!
?
HEY, IT'S ROCKY! HE'S, LIKE, CRAZY!
TEN HOURS OF FREE ROCK! WE GOTTA MAKE THAT SCENE, MAN!!
BLITZ
BE LIKE OLD TIMES! THERE'S NO MORE TROOPERS AND NO MORE COPS TO KICK ASS ON .. JUST THOSE PEACECREEPS AND THEIR WEIRDO BULLSHIT
BUT THAT'S OVER ON PEACECREEP TURF...
BUT ROCK'N'ROLL WILL NEVER DIE!

DIG IT!

HEY, SALLY, WHAT ABOUT BIG CHARLIE, YA LITTLE GASH?
OH! CRAP!
GET YOUR MITTS OFF SALLY, BUTTERBALLS! SHE'S MY OLD LADY!
UP YOURS!
ZZZZ
YOU LOSE, CHARLIE / NOW COOL IT AY-AY-AY / NOW THE CATS AND CHICKS GONNA GET THEIR KICKS OVER AT THE CRYSTAL BALL!
ROCK AROUND THE CLOCK / YEAH . ROCK ALL OVER...
FUKN AY AY AY!
?
DOPE
OH, ROCKY! YOU'RE THE COOLEST, THE GROOVIEST! WHERE'D YOU LEARN TO DUKE LIKE THAT? GENIUS!
YEAH, WELL, LIKE WHEN I WAS A KID I BUMMED AROUND THE ORIENT, Y'KNOW, LIKE, AH, CHINA, HONG KONG, ARGENTINA, AND ALL I LEARNED THESE SECRET PUNCHES.

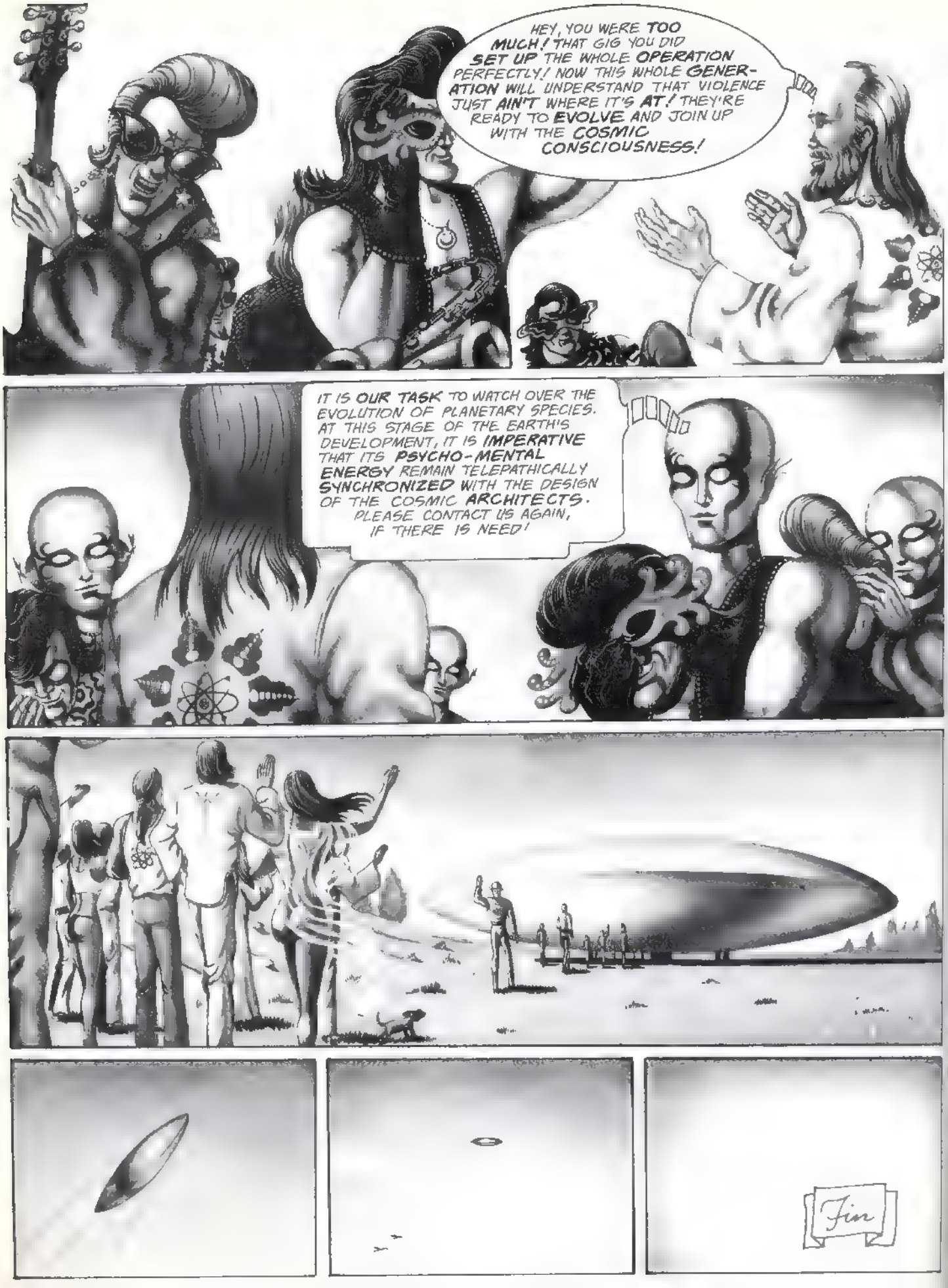
YEAH!
BEEP BOP
IP
LOP
GO, GO, GOGOGO!
CRAZY!
WOW! THAT CRAZY BEAT! THESE CATS ARE COOKIN'! RAVE ON! IT SLAYS ME!
GROO-VY!
ALL SYSTEMS CHECK OUT. WE'RE ON TRACK.
AH! THE SYNTHETIC PSYCHOROCK FREQUENCIES ARE BEGINNING TO AFFECT THE MINDS OF OUR LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS! TIME TO BEGIN PHASE TWO OF THE OPERATION...
THE ANTI-GRAVITATIONAL FORCE-FIELD!


AS SOON AS THE DOME REACHES THE PROPER ALTITUDE, OUR SHIPS WILL BEAM THE ZZZ RAYS ON IT! THE SYNTHETIC ENERGY WILL ACT DIRECTLY ON THE MOLECULAR STRUCTURE OF THE BRAINS OF EVERYONE INSIDE


THEIR NEUROLOGICAL TAPES WILL BE ALTERED AND THE STIMULATION OF NEW CORTICAL CENTERS WILL HEIGHTEN CONSCIOUSNESS ONCE THE NEW PSYCHO-MENTAL CIRCUITS ARE LINKED THEY WILL EVOLVE RAPIDLY...

THAT THING! IT'S MOVING! HEY, ROCKY! CHECK IT OUT! IT'S LIKE WE WERE IN SPACE!
SHAKE IT, BABY! SHAKE THAT THING IN THE EXTRATERRESTRIAL BALLROOM OF THE ROCKGALAXY! A MUSICTRIP TO ROCKERS PARADISE! HEY, ELVIS! HERE WE COME! 'CAUSE EVERY STAR'S A ROCK STAR! AY-AY-AY-AY!

WOW! LIKE, MY MIND'S N RIBBONS! CLEAR LIGHT! WHAT A BUZZ!
THE OPERATION IS COMPLETE!
PEACE, YOU GUYS!
FALL BY AND TOKE UP ANY TIME!
FAR OUT! PSYCHOROCK DID THE TRICK!
THEY'VE BEEN THROUGH A HEAVY CHANGE, MAN! NOW THEY CAN GET INTO SOME REALLY ORGANIC EVOLUTION. OH, WOW, IT'S SO MELLOW!


HEY, YOU WERE TOO MUCH! THAT GIG YOU DID SET UP THE WHOLE OPERATION PERFECTLY! NOW THIS WHOLE GENERATION WILL UNDERSTAND THAT VIOLENCE JUST AIN'T WHERE IT'S AT! THEY'RE READY TO EVOLVE AND JOIN UP WITH THE COSMIC CONSCIOUSNESS!
IT IS OUR TASK TO WATCH OVER THE EVOLUTION OF PLANETARY SPECIES. AT THIS STAGE OF THE EARTH'S DEVELOPMENT, IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT ITS PSYCHO-MENTAL ENERGY REMAIN TELEPATHICALLY SYNCHRONIZED WITH THE DESIGN OF THE COSMIC ARCHITECTS. PLEASE CONTACT US AGAIN, IF THERE IS NEED!
Fin

DEAD

For hours I sat on the ancient stone porch watching the changing cloud patterns. Cricket creatures added their sound accompaniment to the colored tableau. A cold mood of bewilderment and lonliness settled into my bones as I rested. I was a stranger in this land, a stranger even [illegible] body. Should I continue the [illegible] my uncle? Or should I try [illegible] to my other home, my [illegible] self? With no conflicts [illegible] I drifted into a [illegible] slumber.

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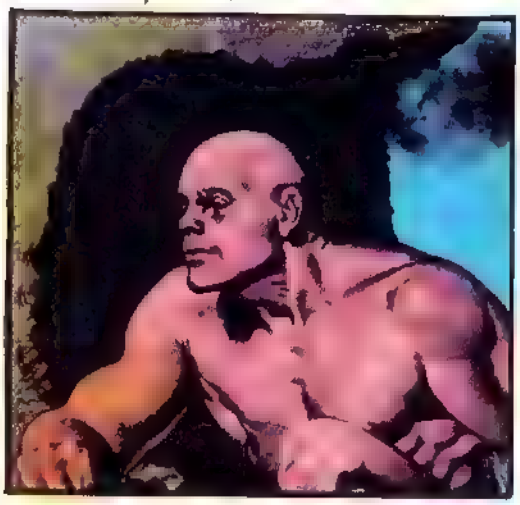
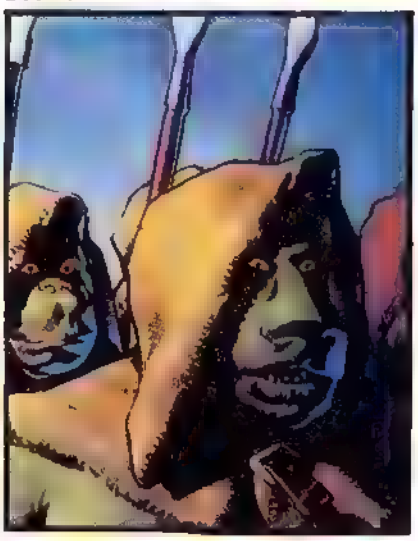
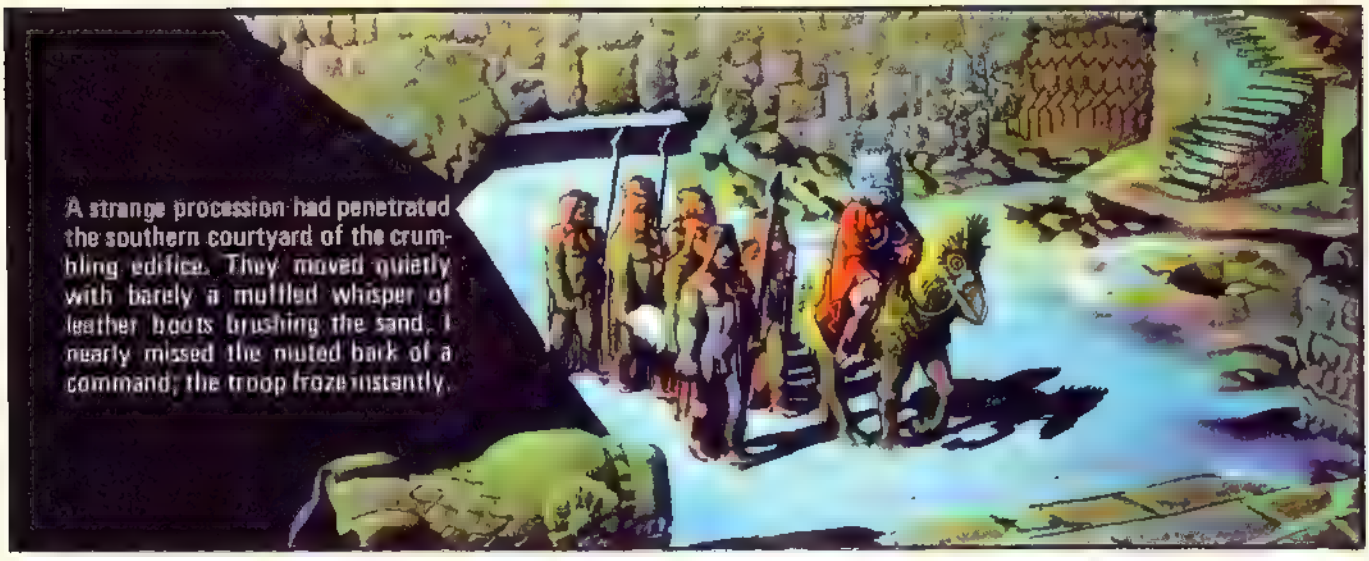
A faint distant sound brought me instantly awake.



It was the hushed whisper of men walking.

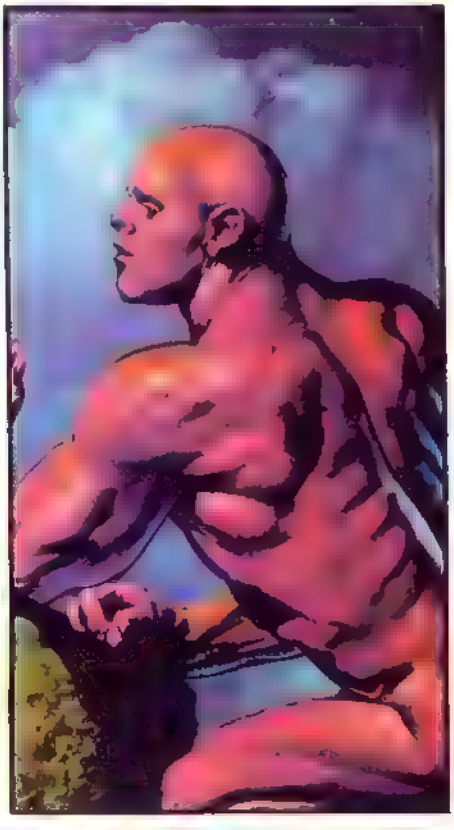
But not men.




A strange procession had penetrated the southern courtyard of the crumbling edifice. They moved quietly with barely a muffled whisper of leather boots brushing the sand. I nearly missed the muted bark of a command; the troop froze instantly.

One figure who rode a beast, dismounted.

I realized that it was a woman, a woman who moved with regal authority.



Two members of the monstrous squad remained with the mount as the others followed the woman. She led the group somberly deeper into the building. They carried two sacks. I thought I saw a hint of movement from within the wrappings.

I should have learned from my last experience here that curiosity can have deadly consequences but something compelled me to follow.

I turned suddenly at a fluttering noise.

A large bat thing had perched nearby and sat watching. It was another creature totally unfamiliar.

The semi-men and their leader continued to an unknown place within the building at a slow, deliberate pace. Finally they reached a cyclopean, truncated pyramid and paused some moments.

I crept up on the opposite wall as the woman ascended steps with two guards carrying one of the burdens. I gained the edge and peered down. The structure was hollow with a glimmer of water from within.
AAAH YAAAA, SUM NOBLOK N'CABU ...N'ZIGNA
ULUHTC! ULUHTC! ULUHTC!
GURGLE BUBBLE
SPLASH!
COUGH! COUGH! CUK!

I was shocked. Several thoughts shot through my head in lightning succession. Something urged me to run away... Or could I save the victim?... Should I kill those brutal fiends? (half

SPLUK!

Then I realized this blasphemous ceremony would be repeated with the second sacrifice.

Suddenly a different level of consciousness took control and I was running...toward the sacrificers.

STOP! STOP!

I leaped high from the outer wall to the guards on the altar outcropping.

It's him!

That cryptic exclamation stuck in my head and I lashed out a kick as he moved aside from a near collision with my main thrust.

SNAP!

The impact threw the first guard off the precarious altar. The second quickly drew a knife,

SPLASH

and lunged.

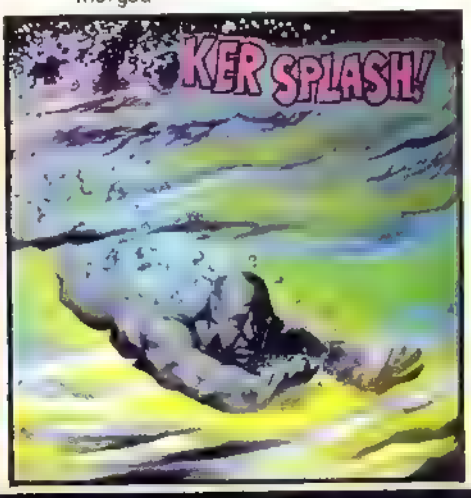
I swept his feet away and he also fell into the water.

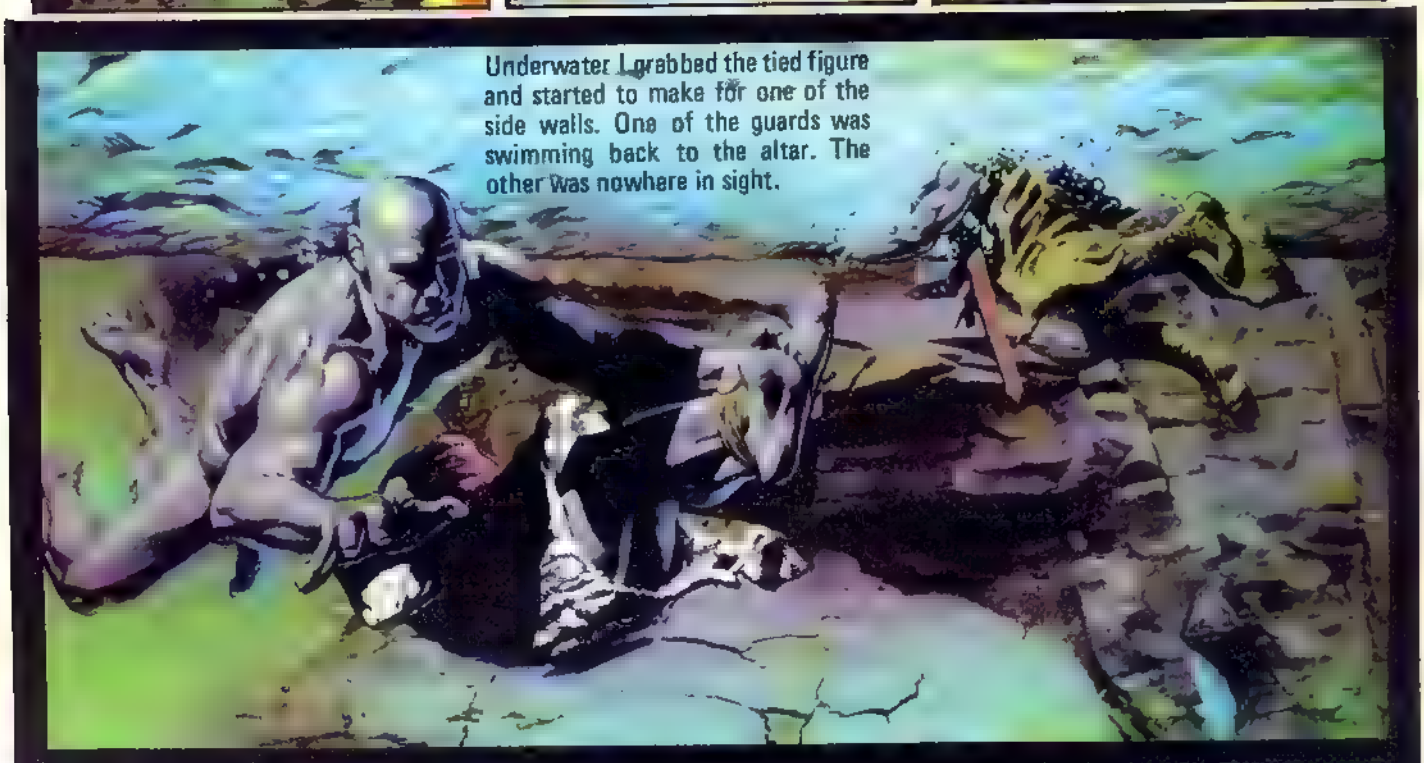
The woman threw down her mask and for the space of a heartbeat all movement ceased and held. She glared at me malevolently. I seemed paralyzed. She played an important part in this body's past. . .but what?

Then she contemptuously pushed the victim over the side.

This jarred me back into action and before the armed party could reach me, I dived.

From behind came an ear-splitting screech that was cut short as I submerged




Underwater I grabbed the tied figure and started to make for one of the side walls. One of the guards was swimming back to the altar. The other was nowhere in sight.

In this murky liquid I sensed another presence. I hooked my new dependent's legs over my head to swim on with both hands.

After a few strokes I looked back toward the guard and saw. . .or half saw a frightening shadowy form.

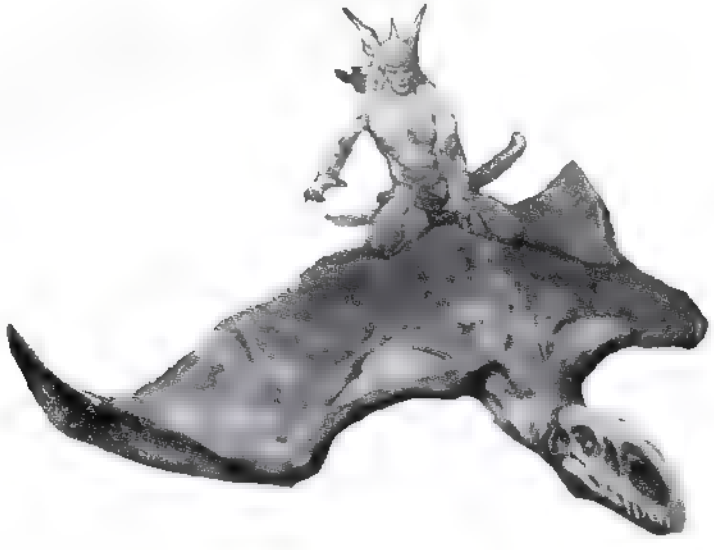
It grasped the guard's flailing legs and jerked him down.

Frantically I sought to escape. There were several decayed holes in the wall.
We made it within just as a nightmarish serpentine limb wriggled over the aperture.
Not yet totally resolved to die I looked about the cavity and saw that much of the stonework was loose.
I lifted a key piece and suddenly was propelled forward. I blacked out.
I found my ward and myself breathing air at last.
There were a few bodies lying about. Perched nearby eating, the bat creature was the apparent cause. The priestess was gone, my burden moved.
ooooh!

NIGHT IMAGES

A BOOK OF FANTASY VERSE

ROBERT E. HOWARD



ILLUSTRATED BY

RICHARD CORBEN

FRANK FRAZETTA

A preview of NIGHT IMAGES, the new,
deluxe collectors edition published by

THE MORNING STAR PRESS

THE HEART OF THE SEA'S DESIRE

The stars beat up from the shadowy sea,
The caves of the coral and pearl,
And the night is afire with a red desire
For the loins of a golden girl.
You have left your girdle upon the beach,
And you wade from the pulsing land,
And the hot tide darts to your secret parts
That have known one lover's hand.
The hot tide laves your rounded limbs,
That his subtle fingers part,
And the sea that lies between your thighs
Is the heart of the Night's red heart.
In the days to come and the nights to come,
And the days and the nights to be,
A babe you shall hold to your breast of gold
As you croon a lullaby;
A babe with the cry of a wind-racked gull,
That shall grow to a round-limbed girl
With strange cold eyes like the sea that lies
In the caves of coral and pearl.
Her soul shall be as an ocean wind,
Restless her feet shall be,
And she shall be part of the Night's red heart,
And the heart of the sounding sea.
And the man who lies by your side at night,
He is not your daughter's sire;
For she is the babe of a hungry Night,
And the heart of the sea's desire!

A WORD FROM THE OUTER DARK

My ruthless hands still clutch at life —
    Still like a shoreless sea
My soul beats on in rage and strife.
    You may not shackle me.

My leopard eyes are still untamed,
    They hold a darksome light —
A fierce and brooding gleam unnamed
    That pierced primeval night.

Rear mighty temples to your god —
    I lurk where shadows sway,
Till, when your drowsy guards shall nod,
    To leap and rend and slay.

For I would hurl your cities down
    and I would break your shrines
And give the site of every town
    To thistles and to vines.

Higher the walls of Nineveh
    And prouder Babel's spires —
I bellowed from the desert way —
    They crumbled in my fires.

For all the works of cultured man
    Must fare and fade and fall.
I am the Dark Barbarian
    That towers over all.

THE GHOST KINGS

The ghost kings are marching; the midnight knows their tread,
From the distant, stealthy planets of the dim, unstable dead;
There are whisperings on the night-winds and the shuddering
stars have fled.

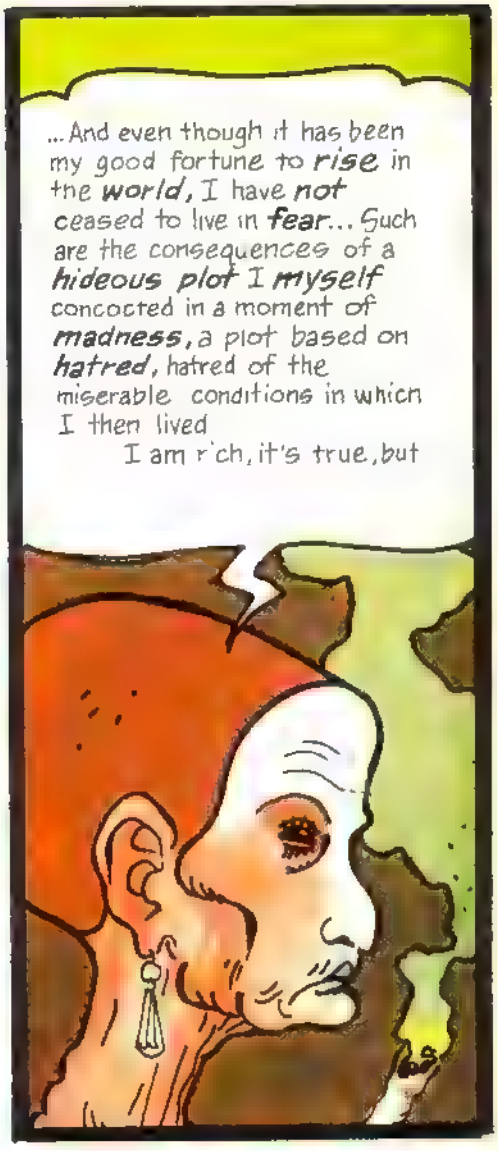
A ghostly trumpet echoes from a barren mountainhead;
Through the fen the wandering witch-lights gleam like phantom
arrows sped;
There is silence in the valleys and the moon is rising red.

The ghost kings are marching down the ages' dusty maze;
The unseen feet are tramping through the moonlight's pallid
haze,
Down the hollow clanging stairways of a million yesterdays.

The ghost kings are marching, where the vague moon-vapor
creeps,
While the night-wind to their coming, like a thund'rous herald
sweeps;
They are clad in ancient grandeur, but the world, unheeding,
sleeps.

I am rich, it's true. But I have not always lived in such *luxury*. I spent a great part of my life, the *greatest part*, in *misery* and *uncertainty*. *Fear*, *hunger*, and *danger* were my daily lot.

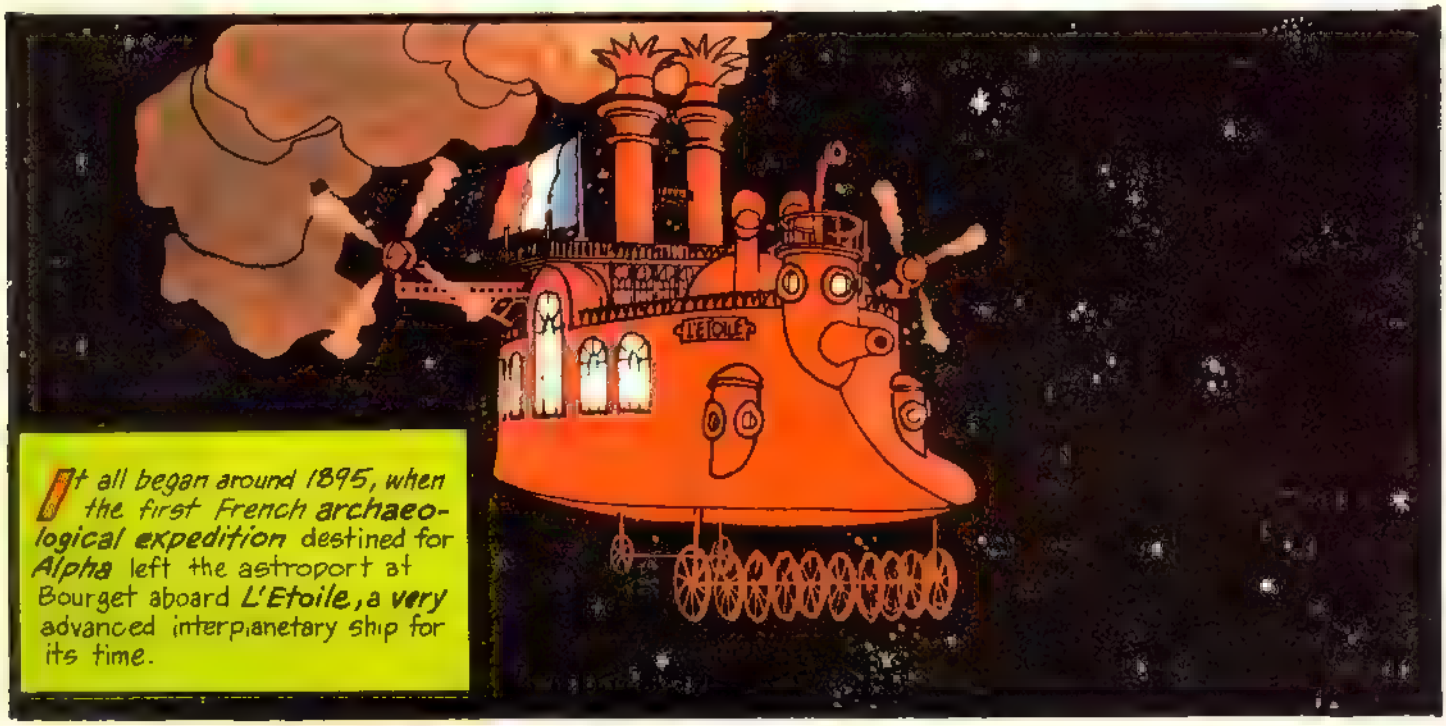
You must understand that *naturally* I did all I could to *escape* such a *life*, for I *longed* for my chance to possess *everything* money could buy, especially *comfort* and *security*. I clung to my hopes...


...And even though it has been my good fortune to *rise* in the *world*, I have *not* ceased to live in *fear*... Such are the consequences of a *hideous plot* I *myself* concocted in a moment of *madness*, a plot based on *hatred*, hatred of the miserable conditions in which I then lived
I am rich, it's true, but

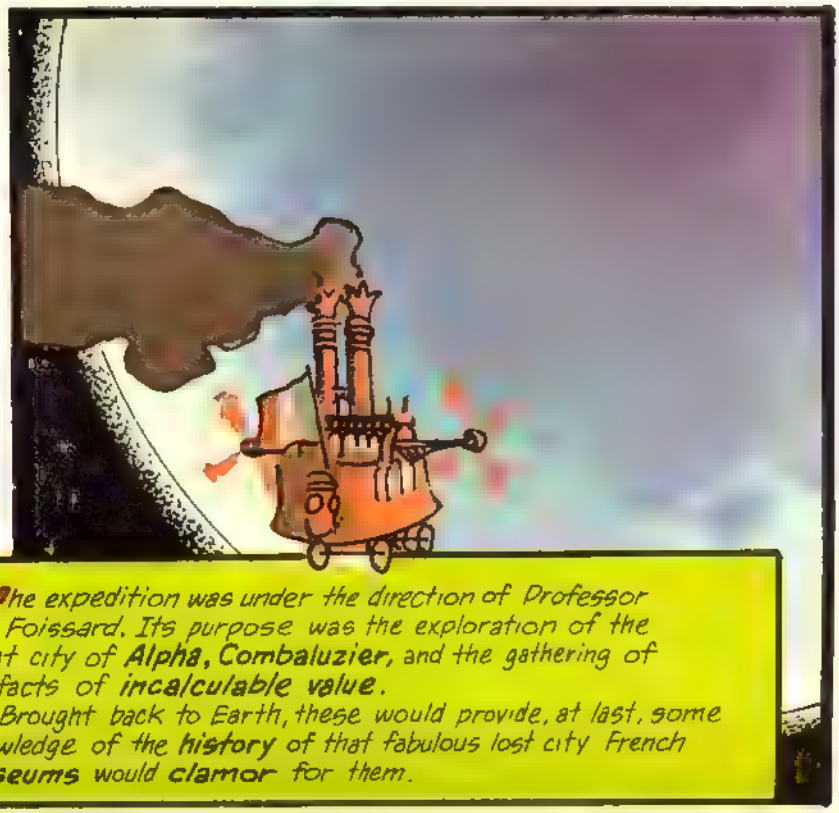
FEAR OF THE BLUE-EYED SLOANE!

In order to understand my tale, you must know first of all that my **father** was originally from a very distant and still nameless, **star**, while my **mother** was born on **Alpha Centauri**. **Heredity**, then, endowed me with an extraordinary **longevity**, which in my case cruelly **accentuates** my **anguish** and **anxiety** as I anticipate my **death**.

The Sloane has **all** the time in the **world** to wreak his **vengeance**.

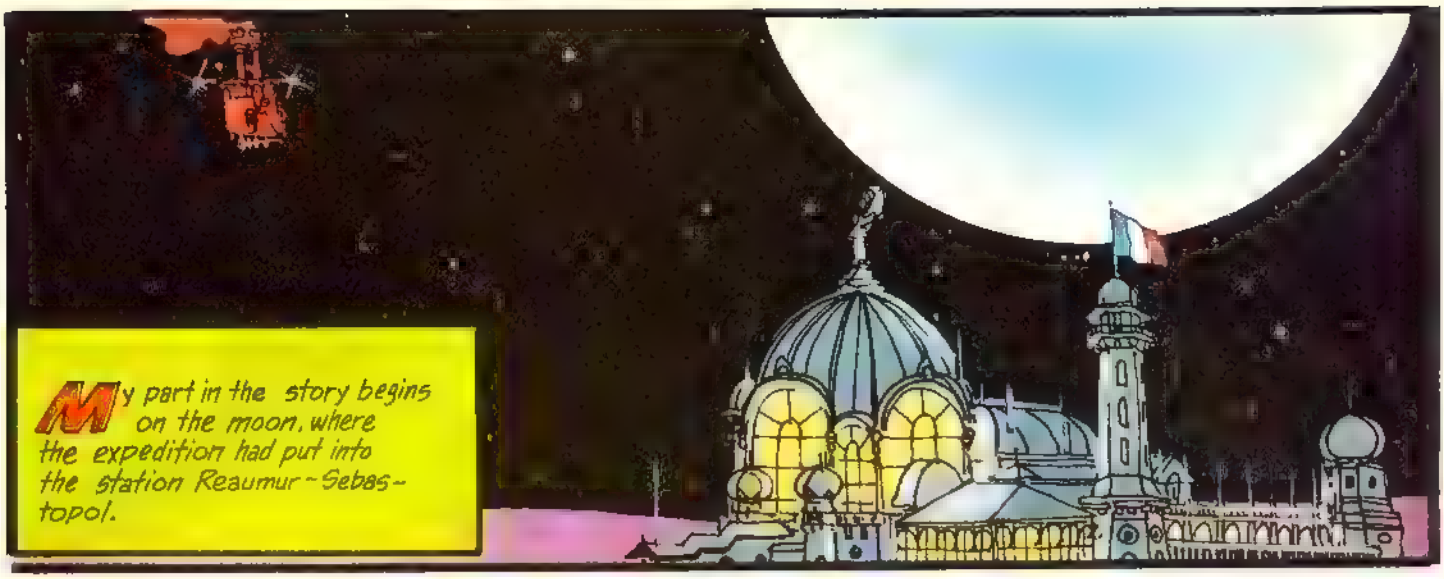


It all began around 1895, when the first French **archaeological expedition** destined for **Alpha** left the astroport at Bourget aboard **L'Etoile**, a **very** advanced interplanetary ship for its time.



The expedition was under the direction of Professor Foissard. Its purpose was the exploration of the great city of **Alpha, Combaluzier**, and the gathering of artifacts of **incalculable value**.

Brought back to Earth, these would provide, at last, some knowledge of the **history** of that fabulous lost city. French **museums** would **clamor** for them.


My part in the story begins on the moon, where the expedition had put into the station Reaumur-Sebastopol.

Bonnot, my dear fellow, aren't you provided with some sort of guide-person who knows something about Combaluzier and thereabouts?
I have the very thing.

A young half-breed... A recent expedition brought her back from Alpha -- her mother was from there. She's quite familiar with the area you're interested in.
A little savage, perhaps, but you know how to discipline little mongrels, don't you, Foissard, old boy?
HA! HA!

Oh, yes, that was I. The little mongrel! The expedition left a few days later. The voyage was without incident, although L'Etoile landed on Alpha a full two months after it left Reaumur-Sebastopol.
Foissard, with a few Sloanes who had been taken on as porters, and myself set out immediately, on foot, toward Combaluzier, which was in a region inaccessible to the ship.

I swore eternal hatred for Professor Foissard, who, like all tools of French colonialism, made absolutely no effort to establish a rapport with the underdeveloped peoples of outer space...
Then, we came suddenly upon a temple which had been erected in honor of some divinity. Foissard called a halt.
YOU! FASTER, THERE! SLOW AS MOLASSES!
Do you understand nothing but the lash?
By Gad, it's unbelievable! To think that these dogs could have built such a thing!
AAAARG! HLZ...
With anxious excitement, we watched him dash inside the monument. I remained in the courtyard of the temple with the Sloane porters.
I was struck by a mad idea...

Ole
AAHH! GOLD! IT'S GOLD!
?
FUCK OFF, YOU DUMB FRENCH PRICK!
ARG

We had no what had happened in the temple, but to judge from the condition of the **archaeologist**, it must have been no small thing The Sloanes and I were delighted

Now you must **understand** that Sloanes are *simple* creatures, *easily* amused...

STOP GIGGLING, you wretched oaf! We're going back, do you hear? About FACE! Hup, hup! Expedition all over! Do what I tell you!
GET it?
We returned Foissard to the ship in a stable but anxious state. The expedition left Alpha immediately and returned to Earth.
The Sloanes were not even paid for their part in the aborted undertaking.
Foissard aged prematurely. The Alpha expedition was the last he would ever conduct. He devoted himself to writing his memoirs, in his apartment in Paris.
Three years passed. The archaeologist longed to forget...
Until one night...
NO!

...NOT THE CURSE! AAAAA
There was no more a curse than there is butter on the moon! It was I who had entered the temple by a secret door, and terrorized the academic... I waited several years -- through which Foissard lived in anguish -- before finishing him off. I made him draw up a will naming me his heir. He died, and I inherited everything.
Ever since, I have lived in his home But I have not forgotten the blue-eyed Sloane... I had not known the significance of my gesture at the time I tugged his ear, but since then I have learned! I have been told that the vengeance taken by a Sloane of that species is terrible, describable only in the most obscene terms. I have lived long, and seen many things in my life. But I am afraid. I live in fear of the blue-eyed Sloane.
FIN
TARDI

AGE OF AGES

A GOTHIC SCIENCE-FICTION TRIP TO THE APOCALYPSE

by

Akbar Del Piombo

Collages by

Norman Rubington

The real sensations of 1984 are behind the scenes. The first is the most prodigious breakthrough in the history of mankind, nothing less than the conquest of gravity. The men who overcame it are anonymous members of a think tank, superbrains who prove their domination of nature by hoisting luggage without moving a muscle. Their little joke is "putting flight bags in flight." A new force is loose in the world, and its name is *pneuma*. In one blow, nuclear arsenals are outdated relics....

The next event is the transferral of Big Brother's remains through the subterranean lagoons of the hidden capital. Here he will lie like a Pharaoh, while his sister, cunningly preserving his mythical existence, will take over the reins of power.

The last event is Little Sister's domination of the scene. Addressed as *Ms. Sis*, pronounced *Mrs*., she manipulates her subjects' minds with a nationwide hookup of tapping devices. It is not necessary for her to watch...she *knows* what everyone is thinking. With this grip on things, repressed drones are kept busy without understanding why.

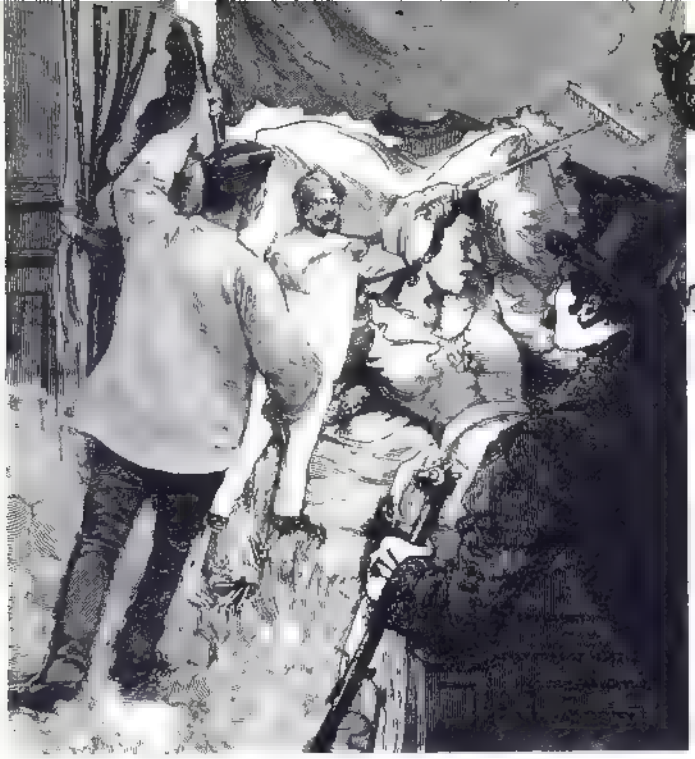
Among her innovations is an improvement over the old time use of astrologers. A pair of gifted spirit-rappers bypass normal channels and tap into a powerful source, consulting with experts who have passed to the other side. Thus, a simple pair of holy knockers have all the gods at their beck and call.

Such is the power background, and it is a greatly changed New York, Sir Edwin finds on his arrival. The baffled sleuth, incognito as is his wont, discovers a swanky "Pearl and Swine Club," where the old ninth precinct once held sway. A belligerent doorman, decked out in old union garb, challenges passing males to step inside and prove they are men. Bewildered Sir Edwin soon deduces the police have gone underground...

His surmise is correct. The hardest of all people to contact are policemen. Confronted with zombie cop-killers, a uniform is a walking death warrant. They are now all plainclothesmen, though sometimes not so plain, as the squad posing as a Hell's Angels tribe. On their new mounts, they rumble through Central Park, keeping the peace.

A nostalgic-type mugging.

"Jove," thinks Sir Edwin, under attack from a disturbed citizen, "this is one complicated city." The rare appearance of a uniformed officer saves his wallet and life, but the incident leaves its mark. Sir Edwin is solidly convinced of the madness running in the streets.



It is equally rife in once-normal households, as he finds one evening after an uproar in his landlady's flat. There, the old dame was screaming at the top of her lungs, while erstwhile sanitation workers exorcised her demons with strange chants and gestures. It was but the tip of the iceberg...

The papers reported a hallucinatory event with the headline WITCH SELF-DESTRUCTS IN MID-FLIGHT.

The coroner's report had revealing details too inflammatory to publish, which, reduced to ordinary terms, described something midway between the living and the dead....

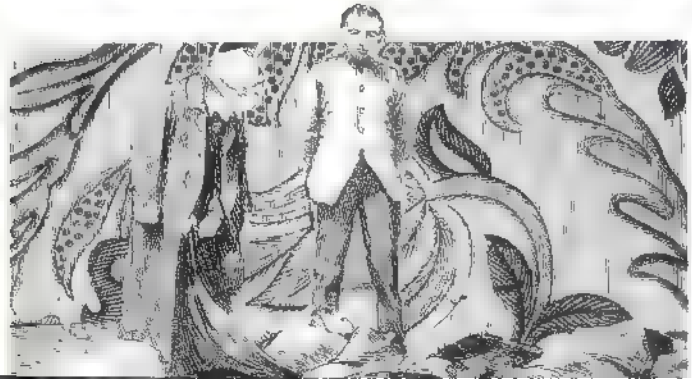
An East Side mugging attempt ends in a fiasco..

"Good Lord," said one of the felons, "she's been screwed."

"Beat it before they think we did it!"

Fearing a murder rap, the assailants fled, unaware that destruction of private property is the worst they would have gotten

Would-be kidnappers are dumbfounded to find they have a proxy instead of the heiress they were after



The climax to this bizarre rash came in an astounding coup de théâtre, a so-called "replica killing," a perfect duplicate of the infamous St. Valentine's Day massacre

"By Jove," exclaimed Sir Edwin, "it's exact in every detail!"

"All except one," said the coroner. "This one's a bit esoteric. There ain't a bullet hole in the lot. It's the work of them witches."

"Witches? I say, this is the twentieth century, man!"

"Well, I dunno...for some it is, and for some...it ain't."

To be continued...

1996
Sodor
the hut!
DEPARTURE LOUNG
CONTR
PASSAG
ETRA
PA
C.M

TRANSAIRBUS
SS SCRIii...

The SHERATON
TOWER EAST

YER EYE DEE!

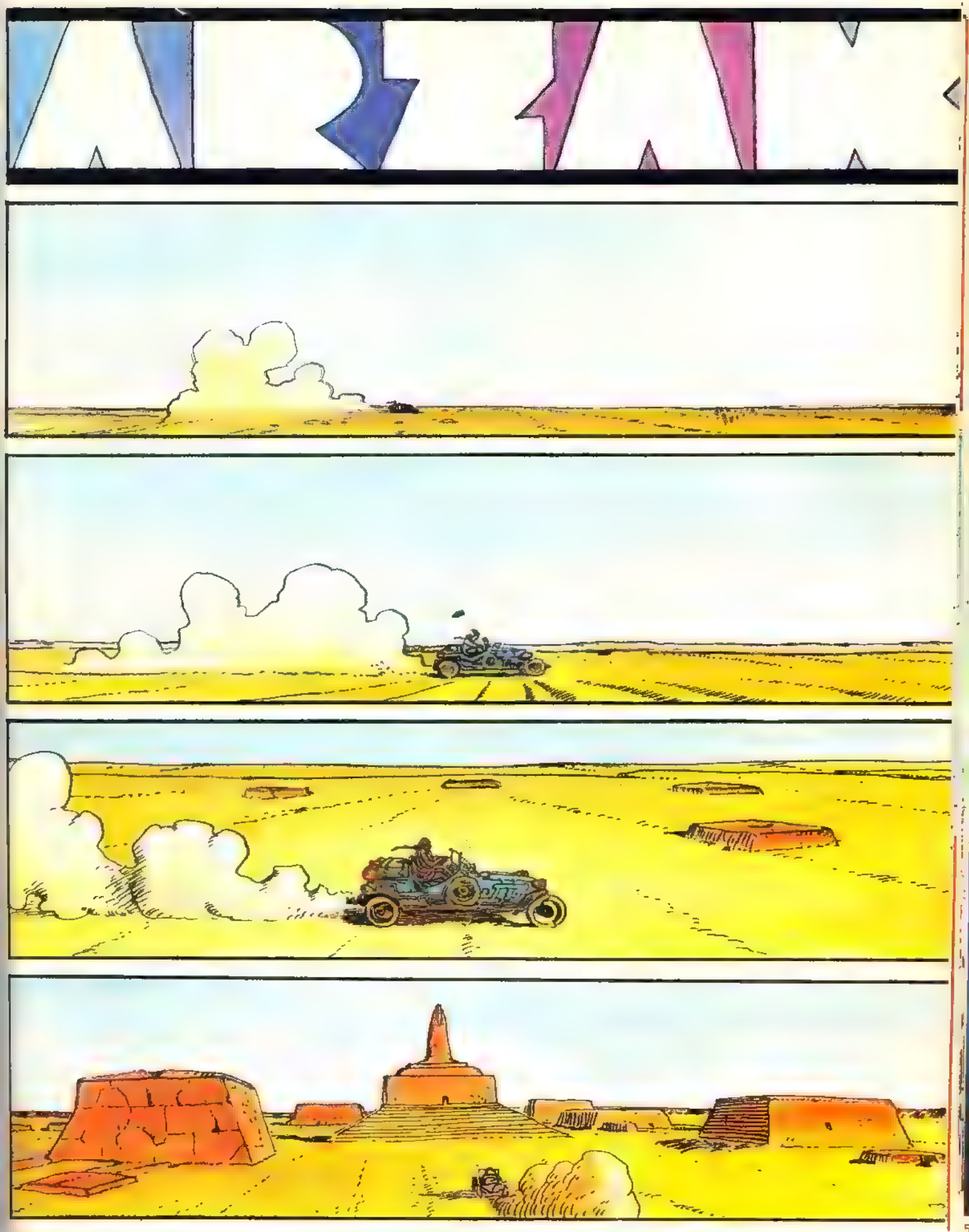
OKAY! KEEB MOVIN'!

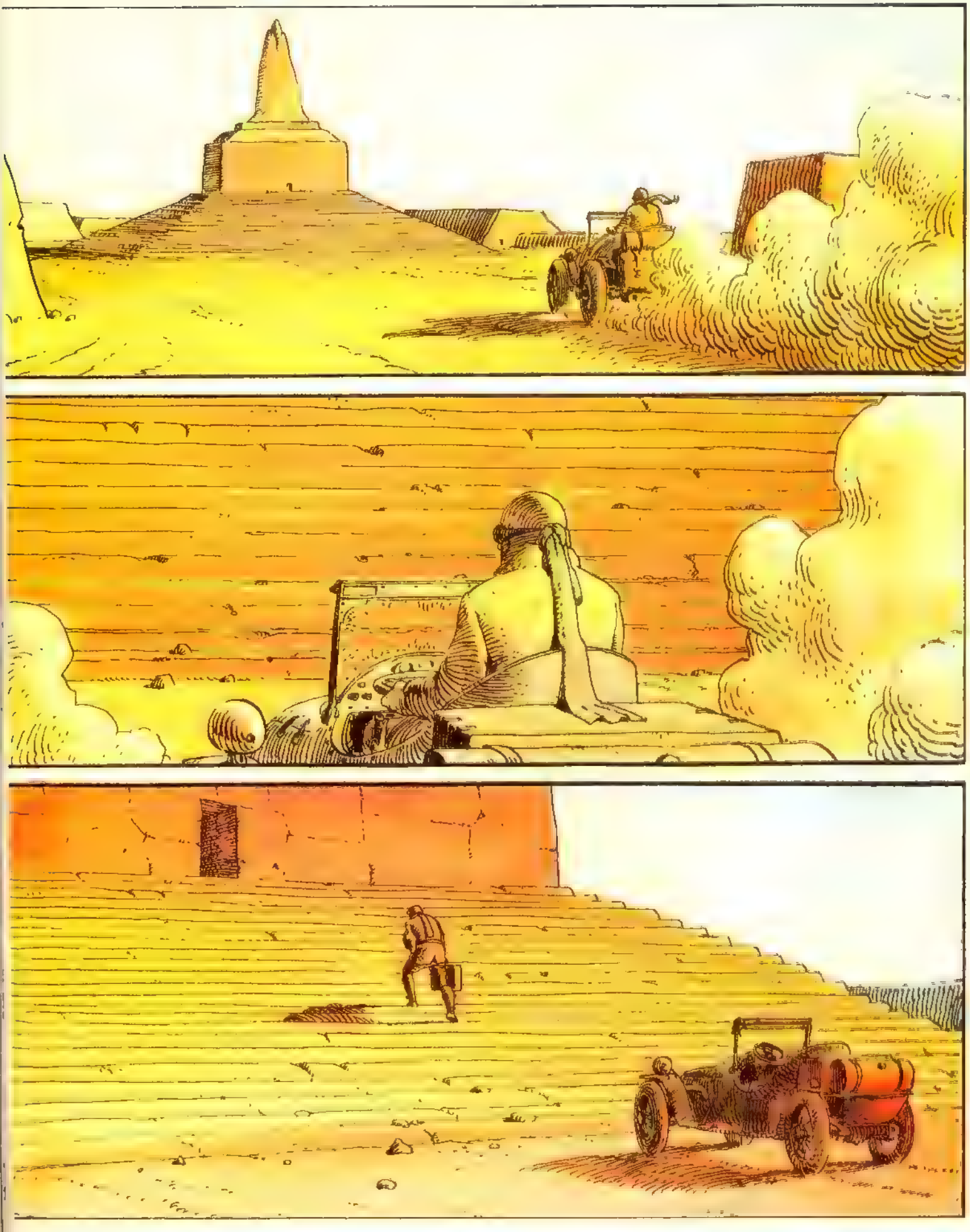
83 HOURS TO TRANSPORT... (LET'S GO!)

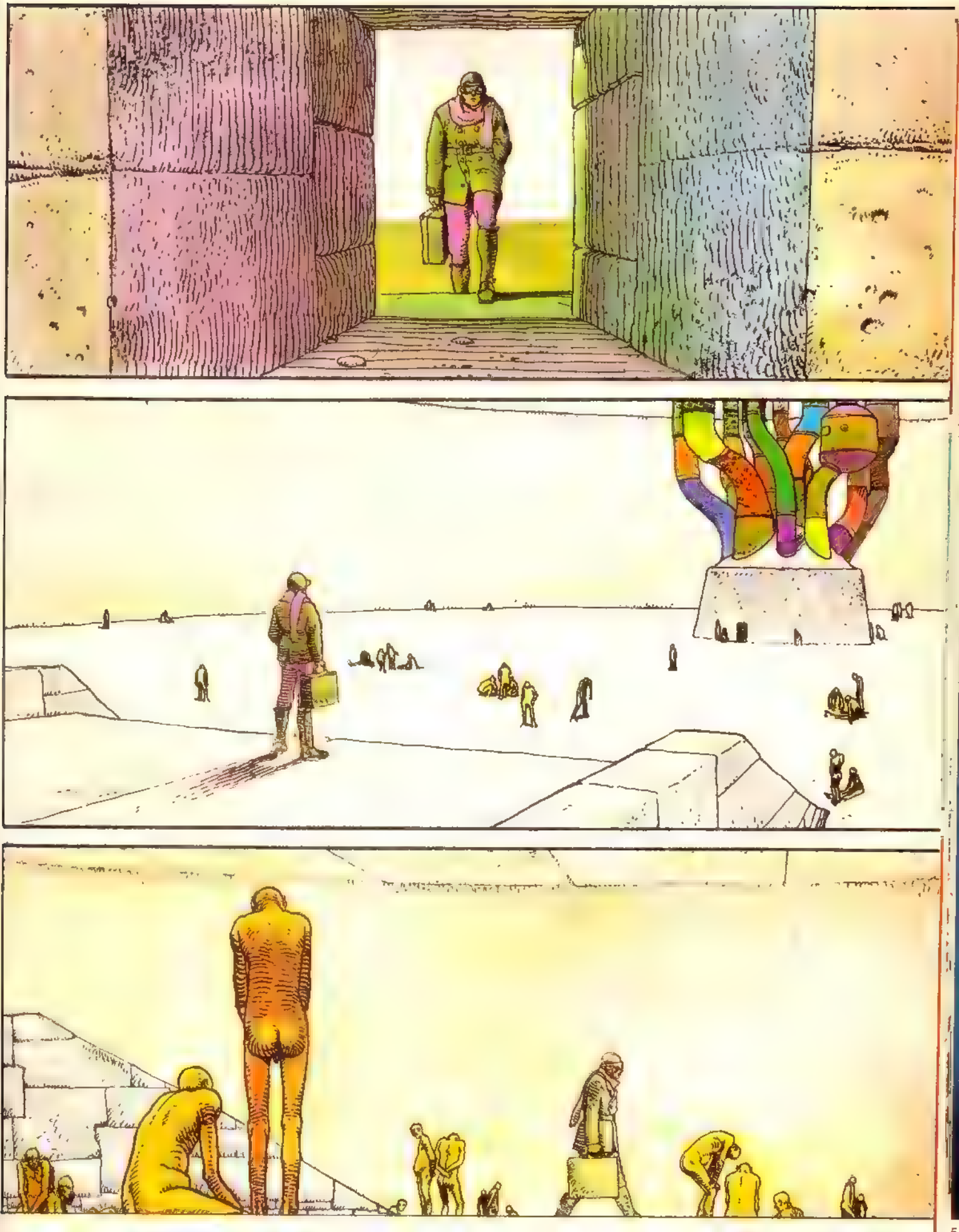
BETTER TRY THE EMPLOY-MENT OFFICE!!
JOBS
JOBS

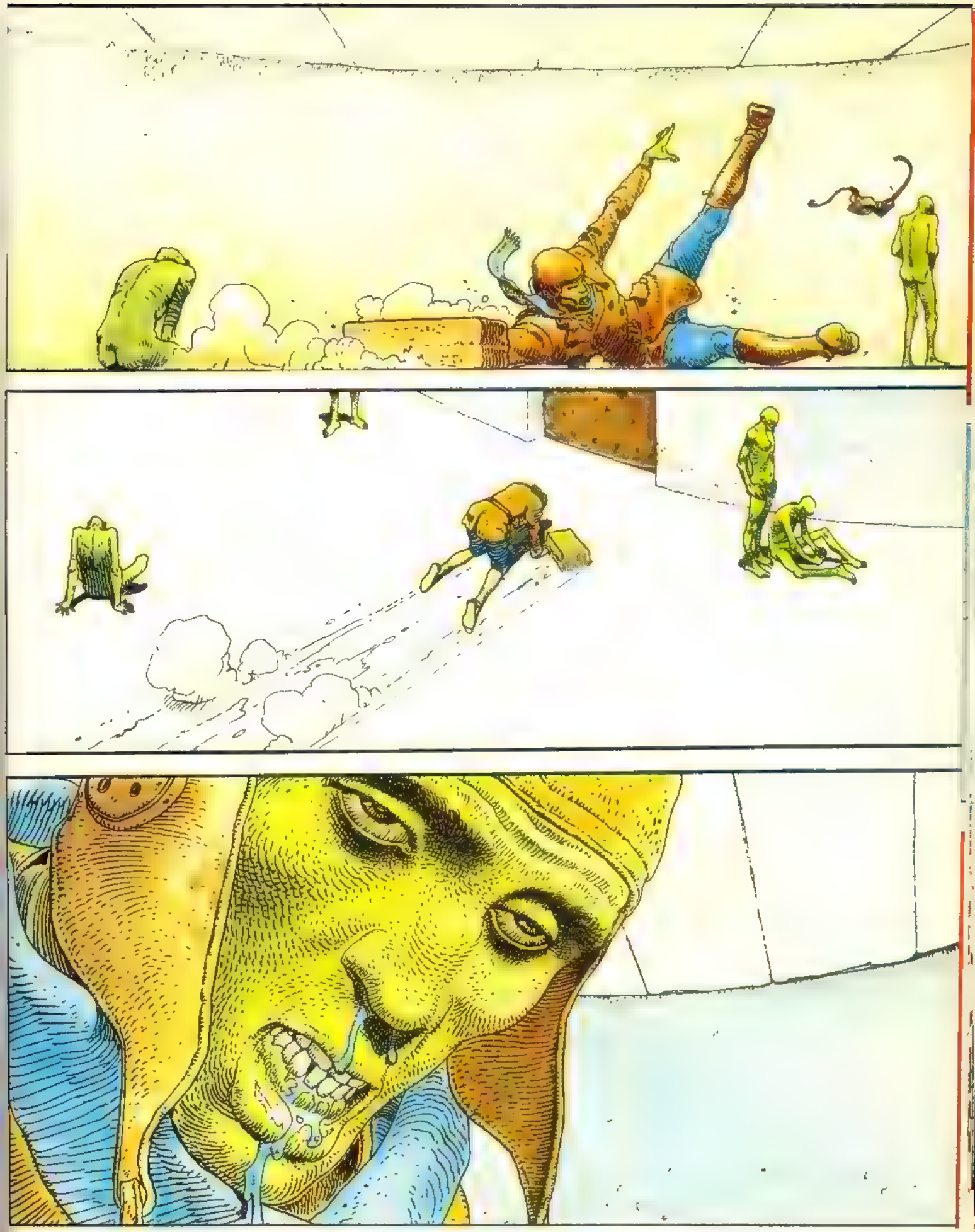
1973/1975
1976/1978
1979/
IDS RILLY WEERD HOW MUDGE I LUG LIG RINGA!
EVEN WITH A BLUE CARD
2
3

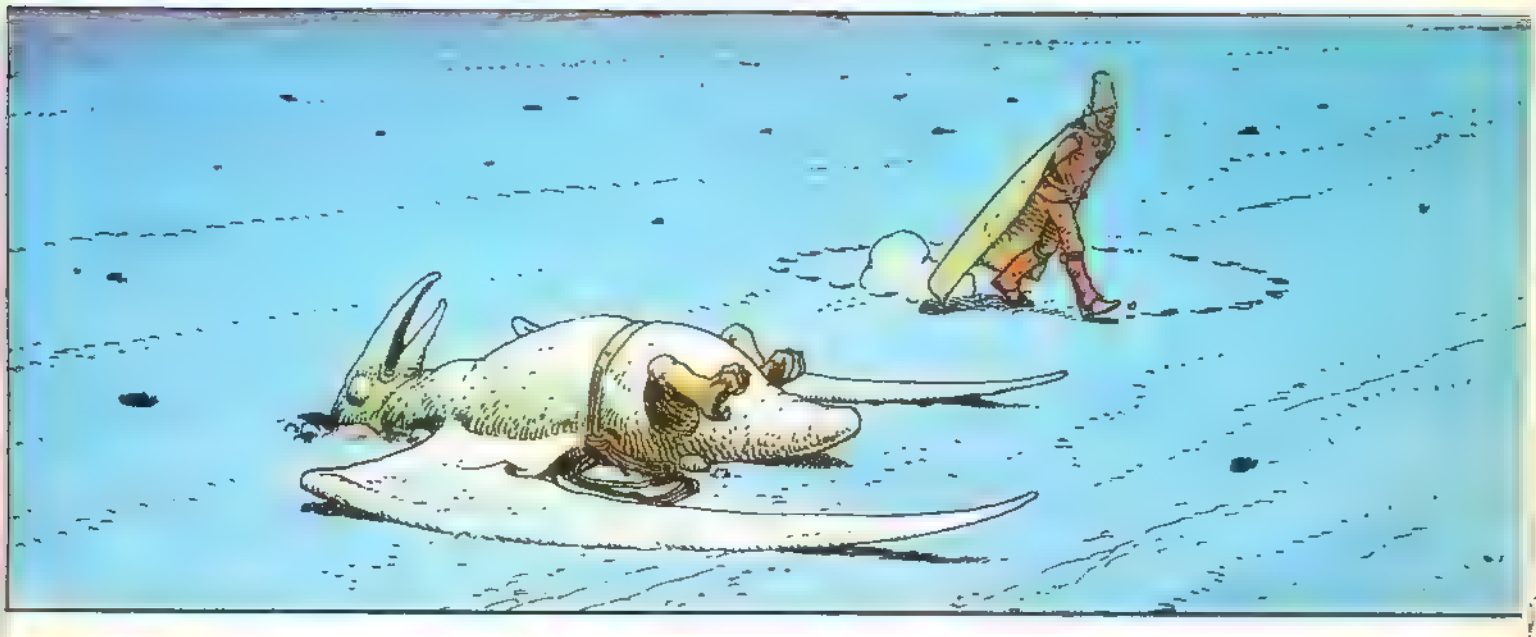
TOO MUCH!
C.M

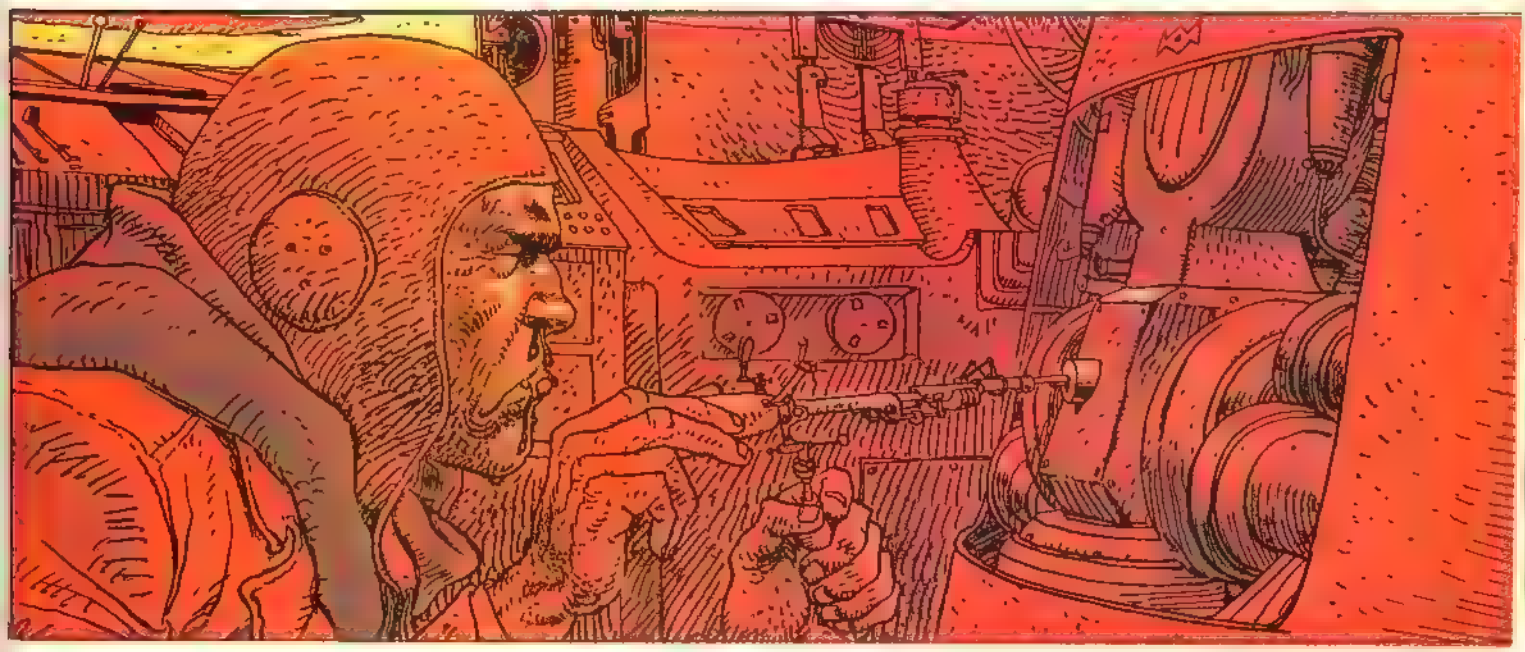


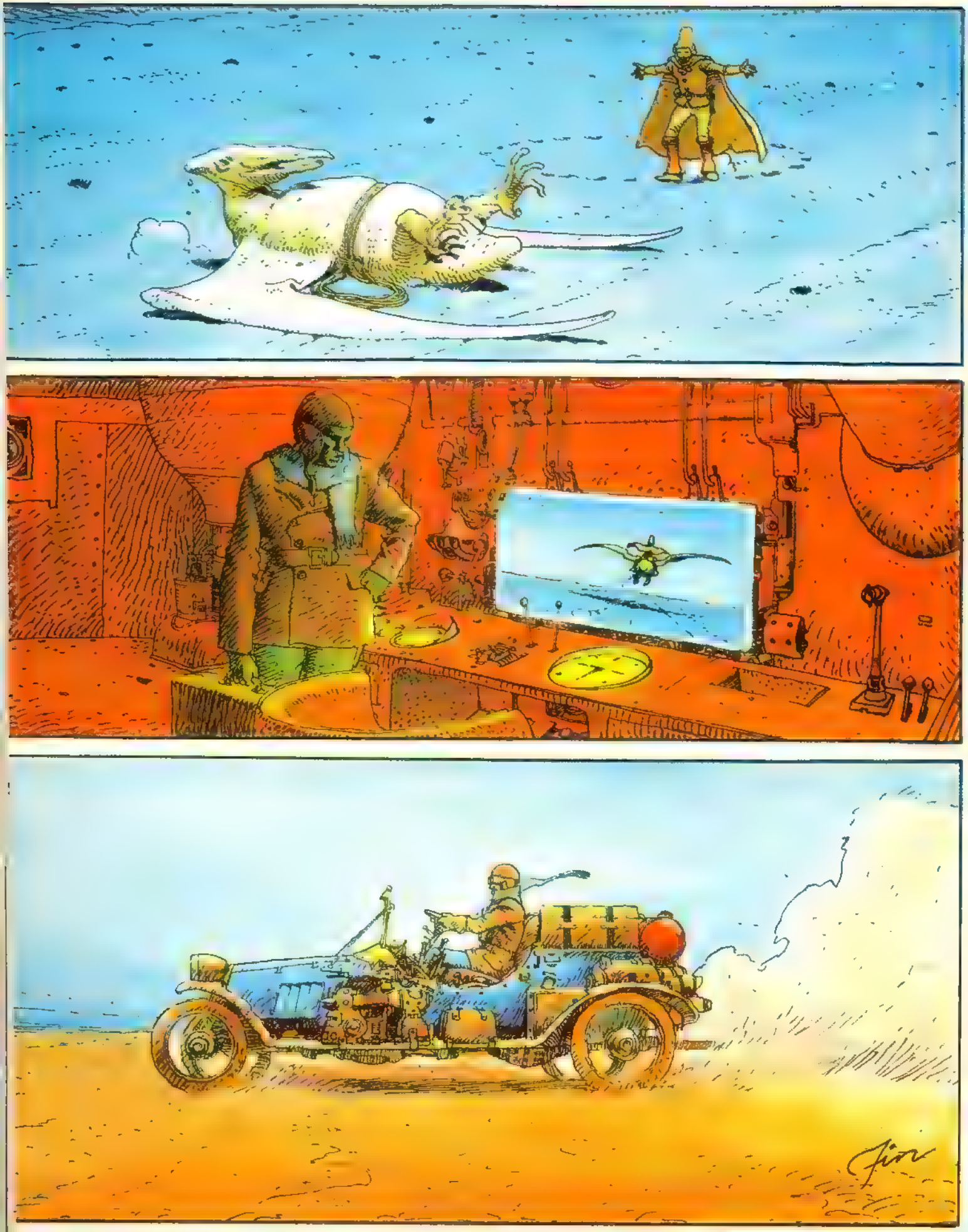












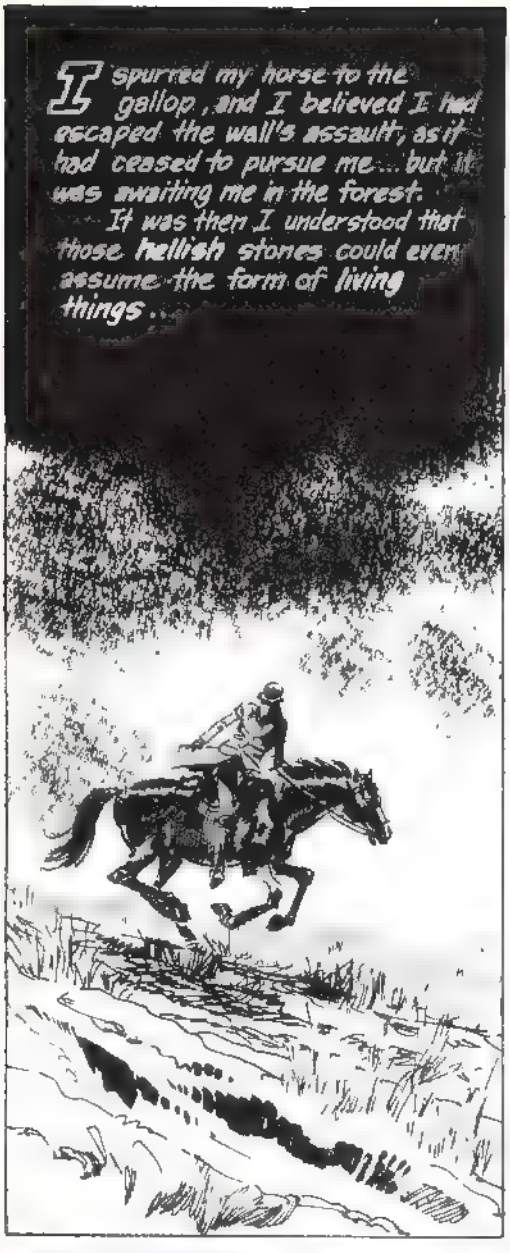
Vengeance

At last, we meet again, thou damned wall, who of yore pursued me with hatred. Do you remember me? Do your very stones have any memory?
For I, I remember...

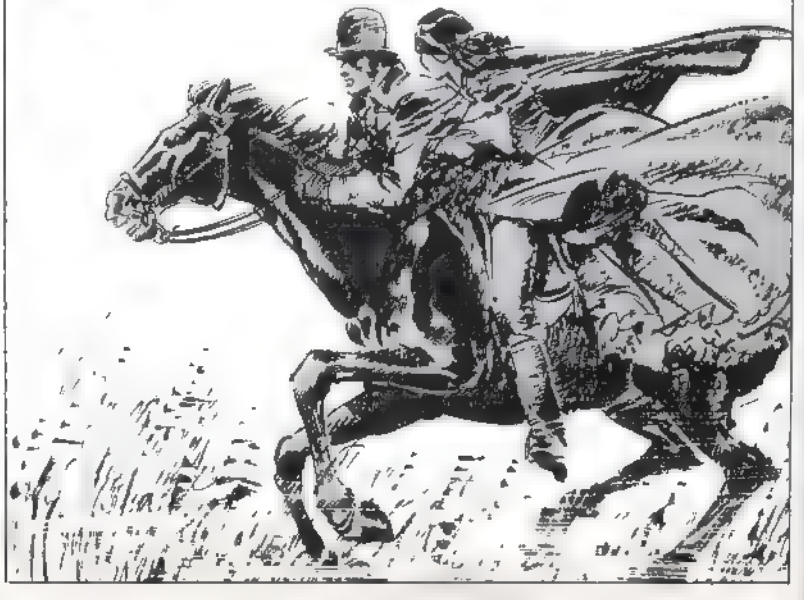
I remember the day when **Kulgenheim**, my master in the black arts, discovered us intimately entwined, **Theodora** and me. He understood that day that I would leave him soon... but the crazed old man could **never** accept this, for he had taught me his terrible secrets. So, one night, when I could **steal away** from his evil presence...

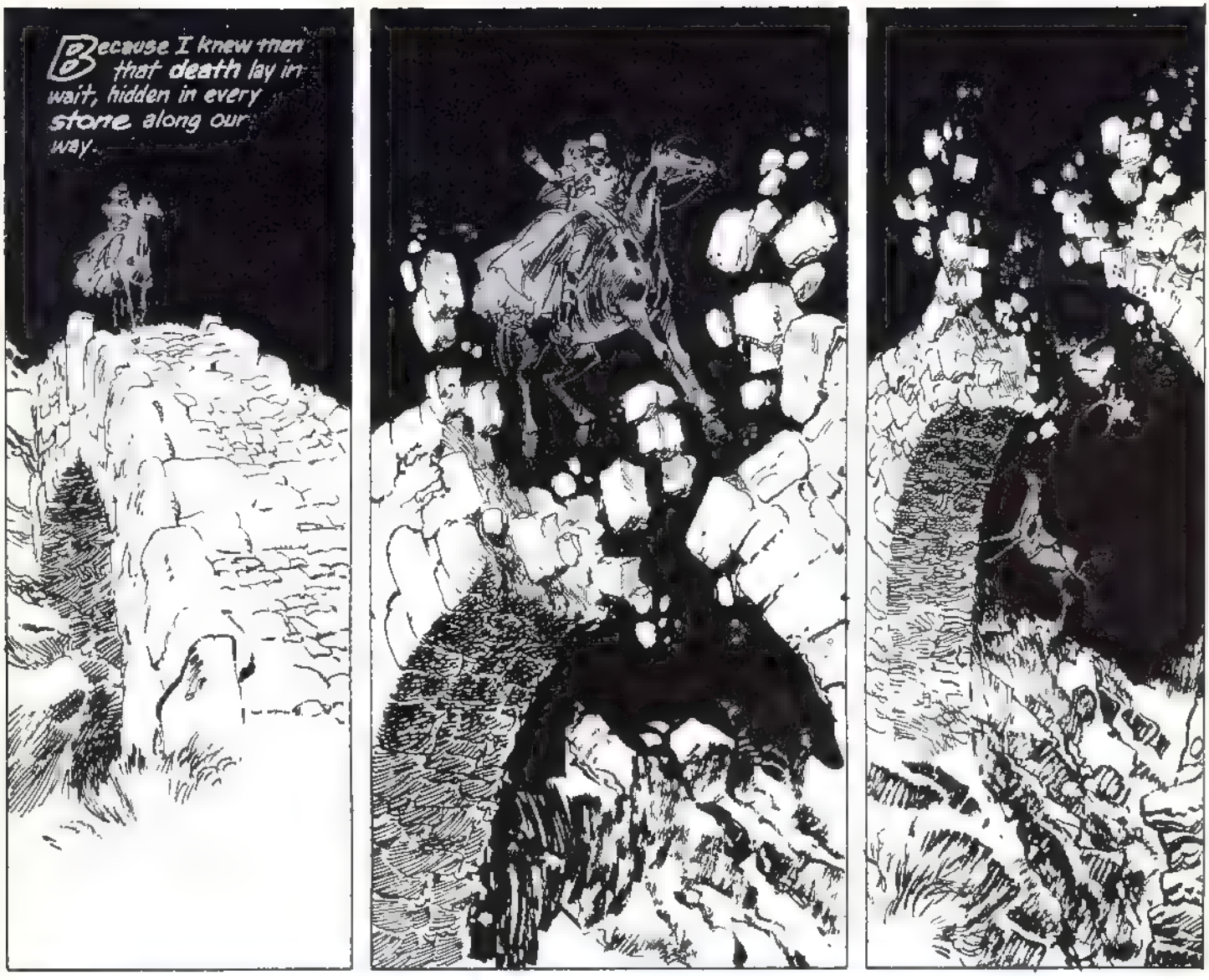
I spurred my horse to the gallop, and I believed I had escaped the wall's assault, as it had ceased to pursue me... but it was awaiting me in the forest.

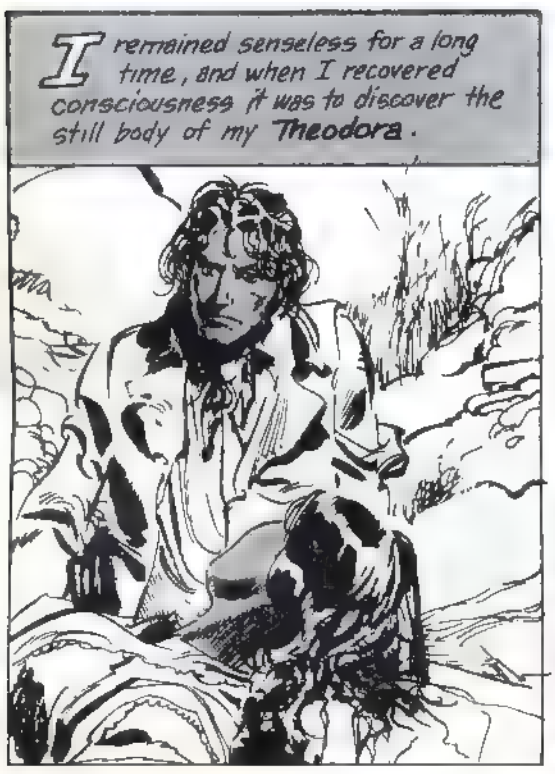
It was then I understood that those **hellish** stones could even assume the form of **living** things...

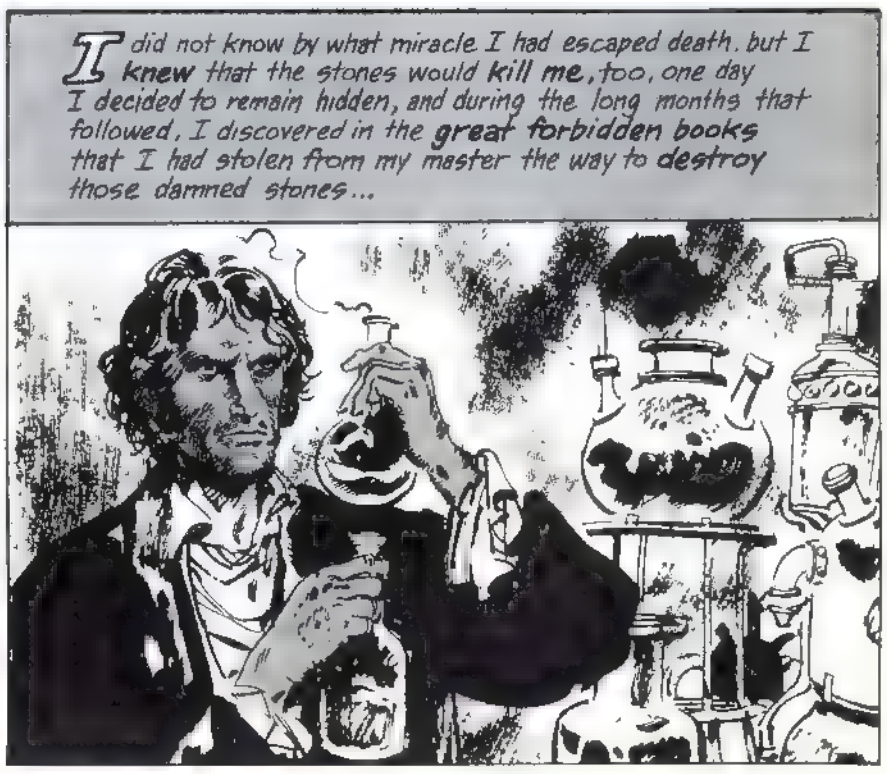


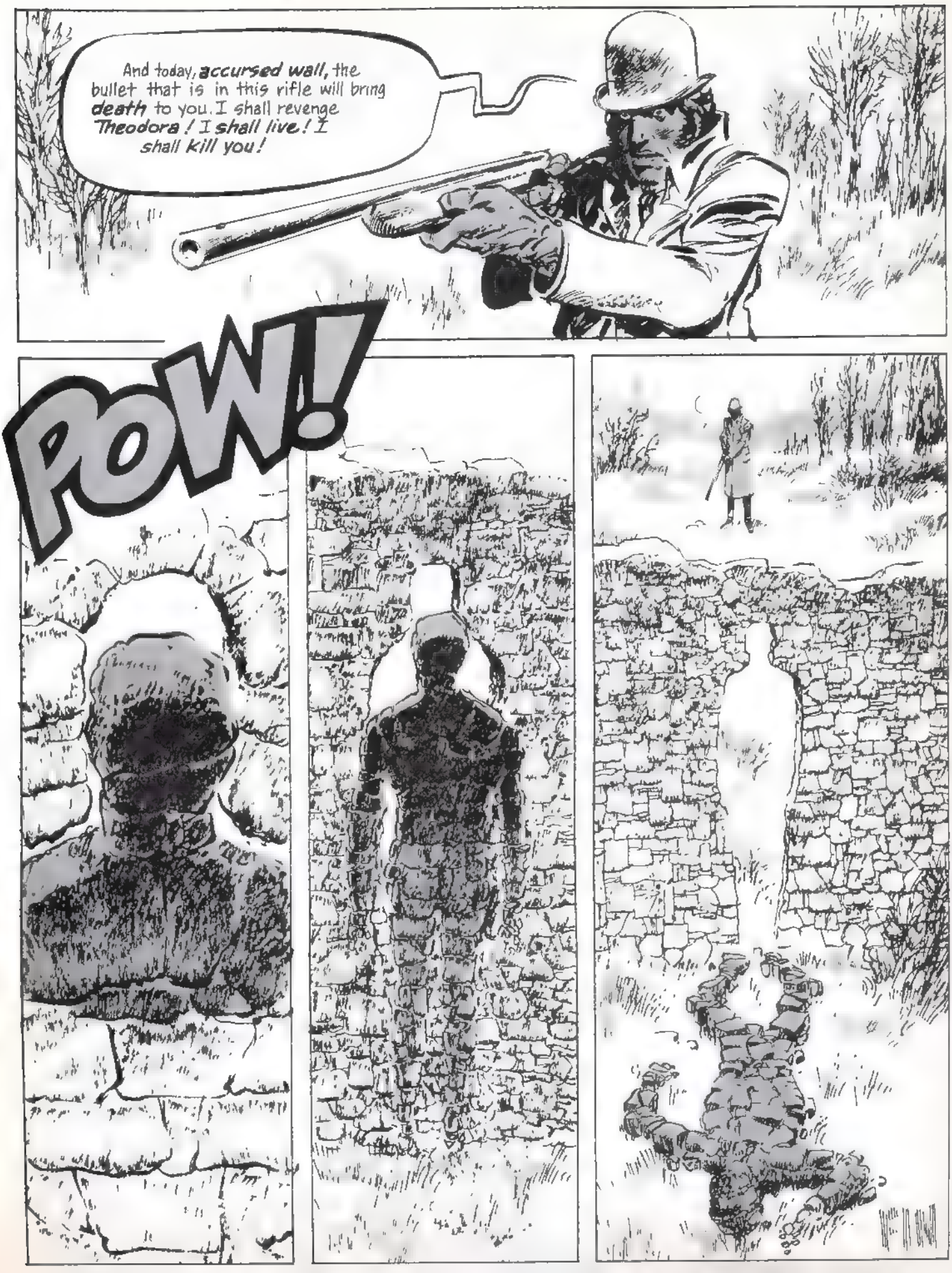
When, at last, I rejoined **Theodora**, I urged my horse onto a **mad** and **desperate** course.

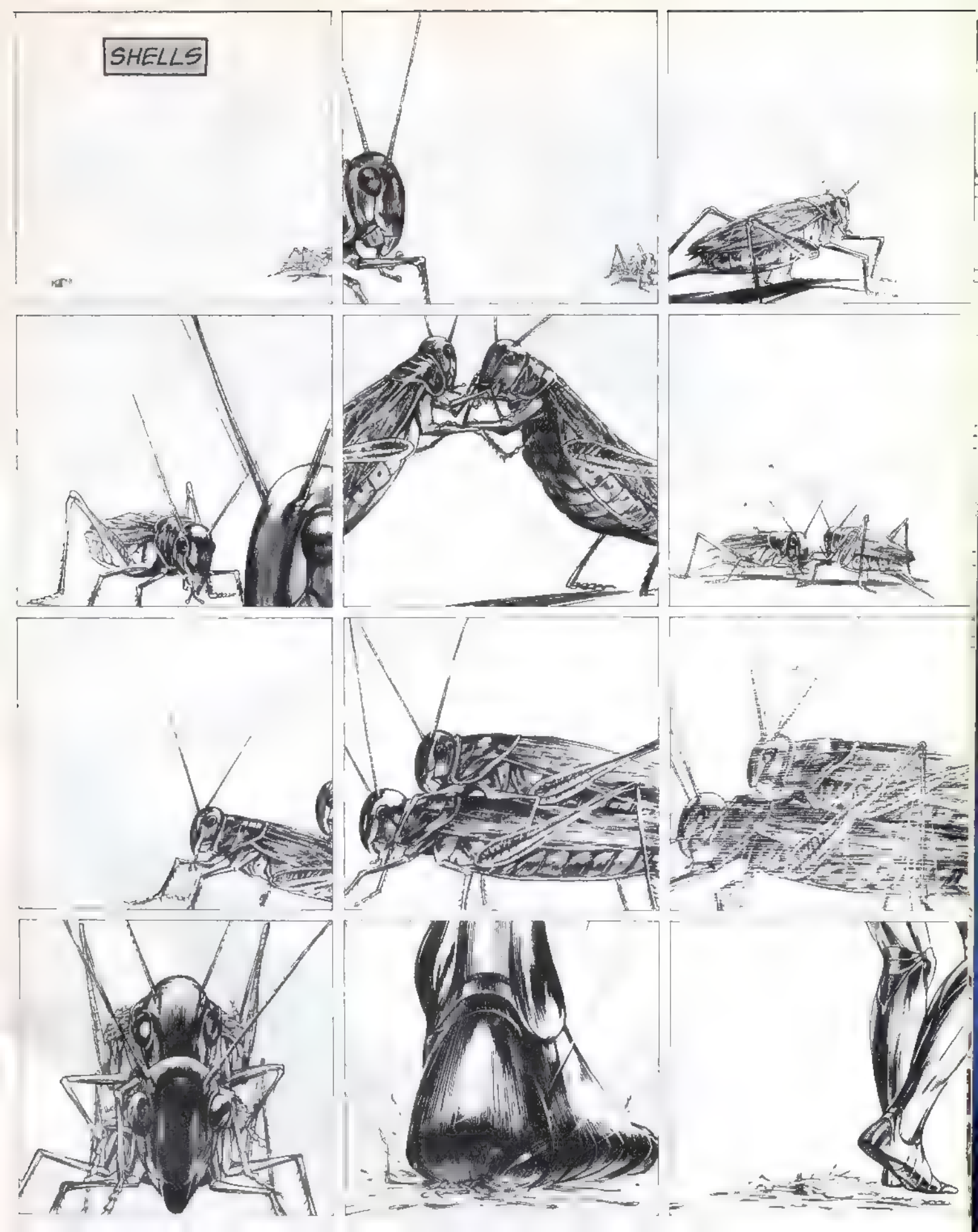



Because I knew then that death lay in wait, hidden in every stone along our way...


I remained senseless for a long time, and when I recovered consciousness it was to discover the still body of my Theodora.

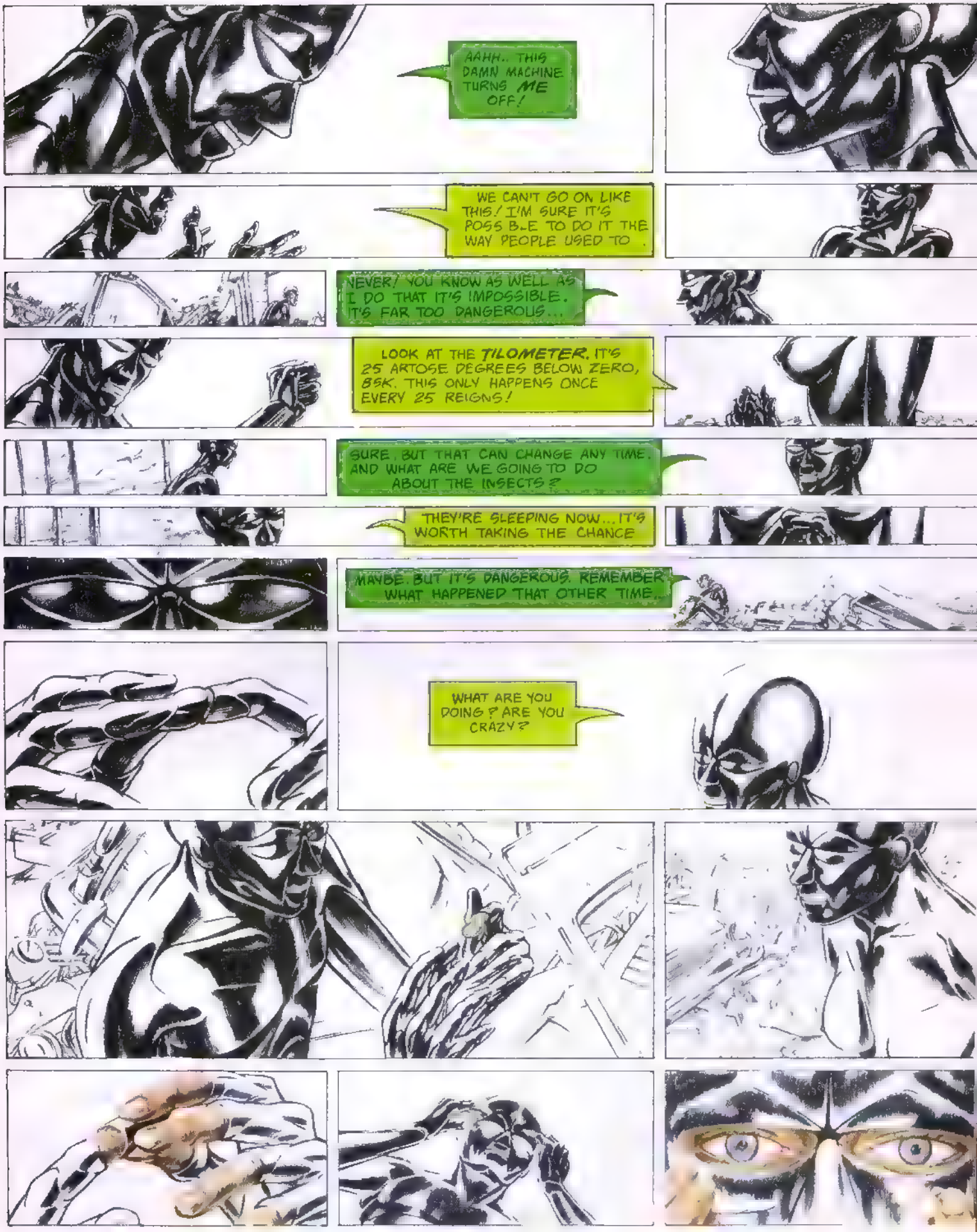

I did not know by what miracle I had escaped death, but I knew that the stones would kill me, too, one day I decided to remain hidden, and during the long months that followed, I discovered in the great forbidden books that I had stolen from my master the way to destroy those damned stones...


And today, accursed wall, the bullet that is in this rifle will bring death to you. I shall revenge Theodora! I shall live! I shall kill you!
POW!


SHELLS

CATCH ME IF YOU CAN

LET'S PLUG IN .
BBZZZ


AAHH.. THIS DAMN MACHINE TURNS ME OFF!
WE CAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS! I'M SURE IT'S POSS B-LE TO DO IT THE WAY PEOPLE USED TO .
NEVER! YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO THAT IT'S IMPOSSIBLE. IT'S FAR TOO DANGEROUS...
LOOK AT THE TILOMETER. IT'S 25 ARTOSE DEGREES BELOW ZERO, BSK. THIS ONLY HAPPENS ONCE EVERY 25 REIGNS!
SURE, BUT THAT CAN CHANGE ANY TIME. AND WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT THE INSECTS?
THEY'RE SLEEPING NOW... IT'S WORTH TAKING THE CHANCE
MAYBE. BUT IT'S DANGEROUS. REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENED THAT OTHER TIME..
WHAT ARE YOU DOING? ARE YOU CRAZY?

YOUR REAL EYES... YOUR MOUTH! IT'S DISGUSTING... BUT FASCI-NATING!
I WANT TO SEE YOUR EYES, NOW!
YOUR LIPS!
IT'S ALWAYS BEEN COVERED UP-- THAT'S WHY YOUR SKIN IS SO SOFT. AND I'M TOUCHING IT, FOR THE FIRST TIME!
IT'S SO EXCITING, IT ALMOST MAKES ME SICK.
I WANT TO TOUCH YOU ALL OVER...

NO!

FIN

Robert E. Howard
Richard Corben
Vaughn Bodé
Moebius
Ed Davis
Macedo
Druillet